

S River Drive -
388.312 9th to 15th Great
T6rdea Falls, Montana
1995

RIVER DRIVE - 9TH TO 15TH
PROJECT NO. M 5205(7)
CONTROL NO. 2178
GREAT FALLS, MONTANA

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**ENVIRONMENTAL
ASSESSMENT AND FINAL
SECTION 4(f) EVALUATION
AND FINDING OF NO
SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

**STATE OF MONTANA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

AND

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION**

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River Drive - 9th to 15th

A Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) has been completed and approved by the Federal Highway Administration. The FONSI is also attached and follows this page.

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FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

For

STPU 5205(7)
RIVER DRIVE - 9TH TO 15TH

THE FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION HAS DETERMINED THAT THIS PROJECT WILL NOT HAVE ANY SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON THE HUMAN ENVIRONMENT. THIS FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT IS BASED ON THE ATTACHED ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND INPUT FROM THE LOCATION AND DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING. THIS FINDING HAS BEEN INDEPENDENTLY EVALUATED BY THE FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION AND DETERMINED TO ADEQUATELY AND ACCURATELY DISCUSS THE ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES AND IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT AND PROVIDES SUFFICIENT EVIDENCE AND ANALYSIS FOR DETERMINING THAT AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT IS NOT REQUIRED. THE FHWA TAKES FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ACCURACY, SCOPE AND CONTENT OF THE ATTACHED ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT.



Federal Highway Administration
Division Administrator

5-31-95

Date

#560
PROJECT NUMBER STPU 5205(7)
Control Number 2178

RIVER DRIVE - 9TH TO 15TH
GREAT FALLS, MONTANA

#50 REVISED

4b ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

AND FINAL

SECTION 4(f) EVALUATION

7- Submitted pursuant to 42 USC 4332(2)(c);
49 USC 303; MEPA 2-3-104 and 75-1-101;
and Executive Order 11990 ;

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

and

State of Montana
Highways Division
Department of Transportation .

May 15, 1995
Date

May 31 1995
Date

Jul M. [Signature]
Montana Department of Transportation
Environmental Services

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Federal Highway Administration
Division Administrator

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Burlington Northern Railroad
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Missouri River Diner
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Falls Construction Co.
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1. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION

The proposed project is located at the northern edge of the City of Great Falls near the south bank of the Missouri River (See Figure 1-1). The project area and proposed alternative alignments are shown in more detail on Figure 3-1 in Section 3.

The proposed project will consist of:

1. Realigning and reconstructing 9th Street, from its existing intersection with the Burlington Northern Railroad spur, to connect with the proposed new bridge over the Missouri River (Project BRM 5211(2)).
2. Realigning and reconstructing River Drive from 9th Street to the proposed River Drive/15th Street Intersection Reconstruction Project (Project F 10-1(9)3).
3. Reconstructing the 9th Street/River Drive Intersection.
4. Providing curb radii and an approach for the planned future extension of 11th Street from its existing intersection with the railroad tracks (approximately at the alley between 10th and 11th Avenue North) to connect with River Drive, a distance of approximately 500 feet. The design, funding and construction of this street is not included in the scope of the proposed project.
5. Constructing a paved bicycle path generally along an east-west alignment throughout the project area.

The proposed project will include measures to improve safety and to improve the operation of streets and intersections to provide level-of-service C in the design year, 2014.

The proposed project will include additional traffic lanes, grading, drainage, surfacing, concrete curb and gutter, concrete sidewalk, signing, pavement markings, topsoiling (some landscaping), seeding, fencing, utility relocation, pedestrian/bike trail construction, a bicycle underpass, lighting, the installation of traffic signals and other street related construction.

The proposed project will include the construction of turning radii at all intersections that are adequate to accommodate the high volumes of heavy trucks that use the streets. The proposed streets will be constructed to, as much as practical, match existing terrain to facilitate motor vehicle access.

Improvements to River Drive will be extended as far west of 9th Street as necessary (approximately 1200 feet) to develop the proper alignment and width transitions for connecting to the existing River Drive.

An existing highway bridge over an abandoned railroad will be removed.

2. PURPOSE AND NEED

As described in the following paragraphs, the purpose of the proposed project is to:

- Improve safety,
- Improve traffic flow,
- Connect other existing and proposed future street systems.

2.1. SAFETY

The following is a summary of accident and severity rates that have occurred in the project area and, as a comparison, statewide on similar roadways:

	<u>Accident Rate</u> ¹	<u>Severity Rate</u> ²
Project Area	3.94	1.30
Statewide	1.72	1.53

The accident rate in the project area is over twice the average statewide.

The severity rate in the project area is below the statewide average.

Most of the accidents in the project area have occurred at the intersection of River Drive with 9th Street. The proposed project will help reduce accidents by providing protected left turn lanes, additional traffic lanes and improved intersection geometrics, signing, striping and signalization.

The existing alignment of River Drive, between 9th Street and 15th Street, includes two 360 foot radius horizontal curves with substandard superelevation which will allow a safe travel speed of less than 30 miles per hour. Also, in this area, there is an existing railroad bridge with a vertical curve with poor sight distance and a steep approach grade. Adjacent landowners and members of the public have indicated that they feel very uncomfortable driving these curves and they feel they are very unsafe. The narrow pavement and the narrow bridge widths also contribute to the discomfort and high accident rate on the roadway.

¹Accident rate indicates the accidents that have occurred in accidents per one million vehicle miles driven per year.

²The severity rate is a measure of the severity of the accidents that have occurred. For example, on a roadway where fatal accidents and a large number of injury accidents have occurred, the severity rate will be high compared with a roadway where mostly only property damage accidents have occurred.

On the existing alignment of 9th Street, there is one horizontal curve with a 125 foot radius which will allow a safe travel speed of less than 20 miles per hour and there is one horizontal curve with a 250 foot radius which will allow a safe travel speed of less than 30 miles per hour.

As indicated in Section 1., the proposed project will improve safety by reconstructing the roadway to provide at least a 35 mile per hour design speed which is considered desirable for a roadway of this type.

2.2. TRAFFIC FLOW

Traffic volumes at the River Drive/9th Street intersection in the implementation year, 1994 and the design year, 2014 are shown on Figures 2-1 and 2-2. Approximately 7.6% of the traffic is estimated to be truck traffic.

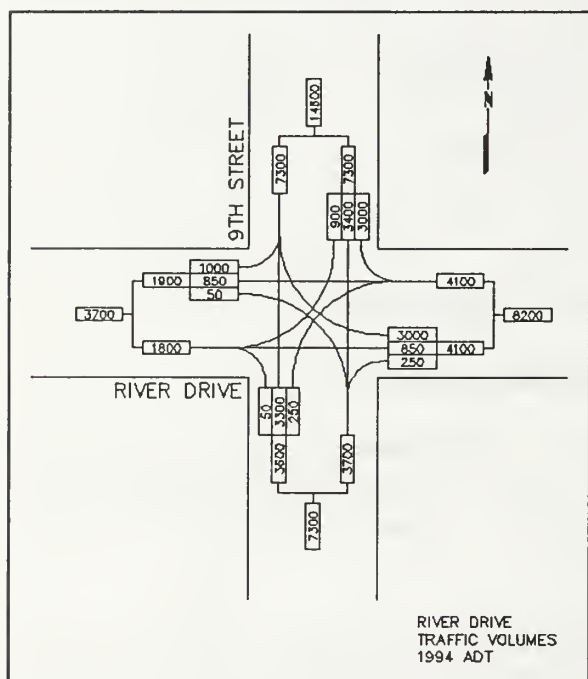


Figure 2-1, 1994 Traffic Volumes

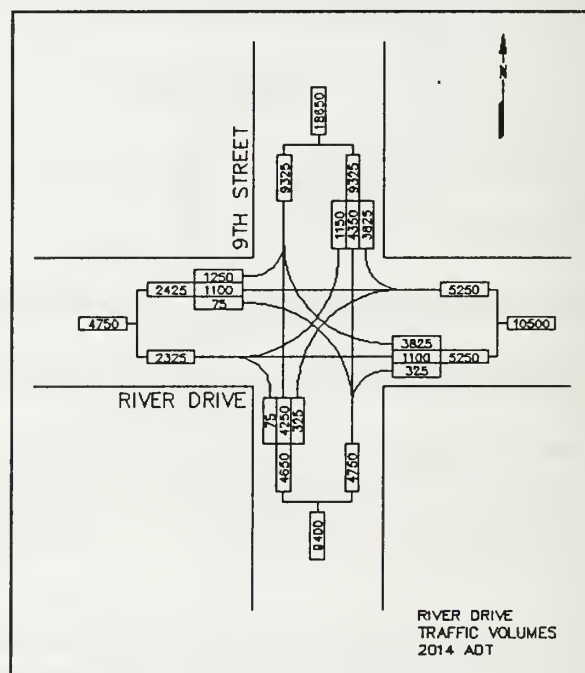


Figure 2-2, 2014 Traffic Volumes

The existing intersection of River Drive and 9th Street is currently operating at level-of-service (LOS) F.

Desirable LOS for an intersection of this type is C.

The proposed project will improve the existing streets and intersections to provide the desirable LOS through the design year, 2014.

There is a substantial number of left turns from the roadway to the existing construction companies, a restaurant and other businesses along the project. These left turns, without protected left-turn lanes, must be made from the through traffic lane and thereby slow the flow of traffic and decrease safety. The proposed project will provide additional lanes to allow left turns from the roadway without interfering with the flow of through traffic.

2.3. CONNECTION WITH OTHER STREET SYSTEMS

This proposed project will connect with the following existing or future street construction projects:

- Project BRM 5211(2), 9th - 10th Streets North Connector Bridge, scheduled for completion in 1996. Various alternatives were evaluated and potential impacts have been identified in an environmental assessment. A "Finding of No Significant Impact" (FONSI) for the selected alternative was signed by the Federal Highway Administration on 25 March 1993. A Section 4(f) Evaluation, for the impacts the project will have on parks was completed concurrently.
- Project F 10-1(9)3, Intersection of 15th Street & River Drive, scheduled for construction beginning in 1995. Alternatives for this project were evaluated and potential impacts identified in a Categorical Exclusion which was completed and approved on 11 May 1992.
- O.F. 979, 9th/10th Street Bridge Approach - South End, constructed in 1991. The project included the reconstruction of 9th Street, from 8th Avenue North to the railroad tracks, to provide for future connection to the 9th/10th Street North Connector Bridge.
- The Rivers Edge Bicycle Trail is being constructed, as funds are available, along the Missouri River through the City of Great Falls.

3. ALTERNATIVES UNDER CONSIDERATION

Following paragraphs describe alignment alternatives, lane configuration alternatives and design alternatives that are under consideration for the proposed project.

3.1. NO-ACTION ALTERNATIVE

The No-Action Alternative is evaluated in detail in this document, as required by Paragraph 1502.14(d) of the CEQ Regulations³, and will consist of leaving the existing streets as they currently exist with no substantial changes or improvements.

3.2. ALIGNMENT ALTERNATIVES

Alignment alternatives under consideration for the proposed project are shown on Figure 3-1.

3.2.1. 9th Street

The alignment for 9th Street was, in effect, established with the completion of the construction of 9th Street to the railroad tracks and with the determination of the alignment for the new Missouri River Bridge (Project BRM 5211(2)). No significant alignment variations are practical while still matching these two projects on both ends.

3.2.2. River Drive

Alignment A, for River Drive, includes wide, flat horizontal curves but has a poor angle of intersection with 9th Street (66° compared with 75° to 90° desirable). Alignment A is not evaluated further in this document because:

- It has a poor angle of intersection with 9th Street which reduces sight distance and increases the difficulty for drivers approaching the intersection to see and avoid crossing traffic.
- Comments at the public scoping meeting were opposed to it.

Alignment B, for River Drive, has sharper, 6° horizontal curves, but has an 81° angle of intersection with 9th Street, which is much more desirable. The 6° horizontal curves will meet design standards for 35 miles per hour. Alignment Alternative B is evaluated in detail in this document.

³Council on Environmental Quality, Executive Office of the President, Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act, Reprint 40 CFR Parts 1500-1508 (as of July 01, 1986).

RIVER DRIVE - 9TH TO 15TH

PROJECT NO. M 5205(7)

CASCADE COUNTY, MONTANA

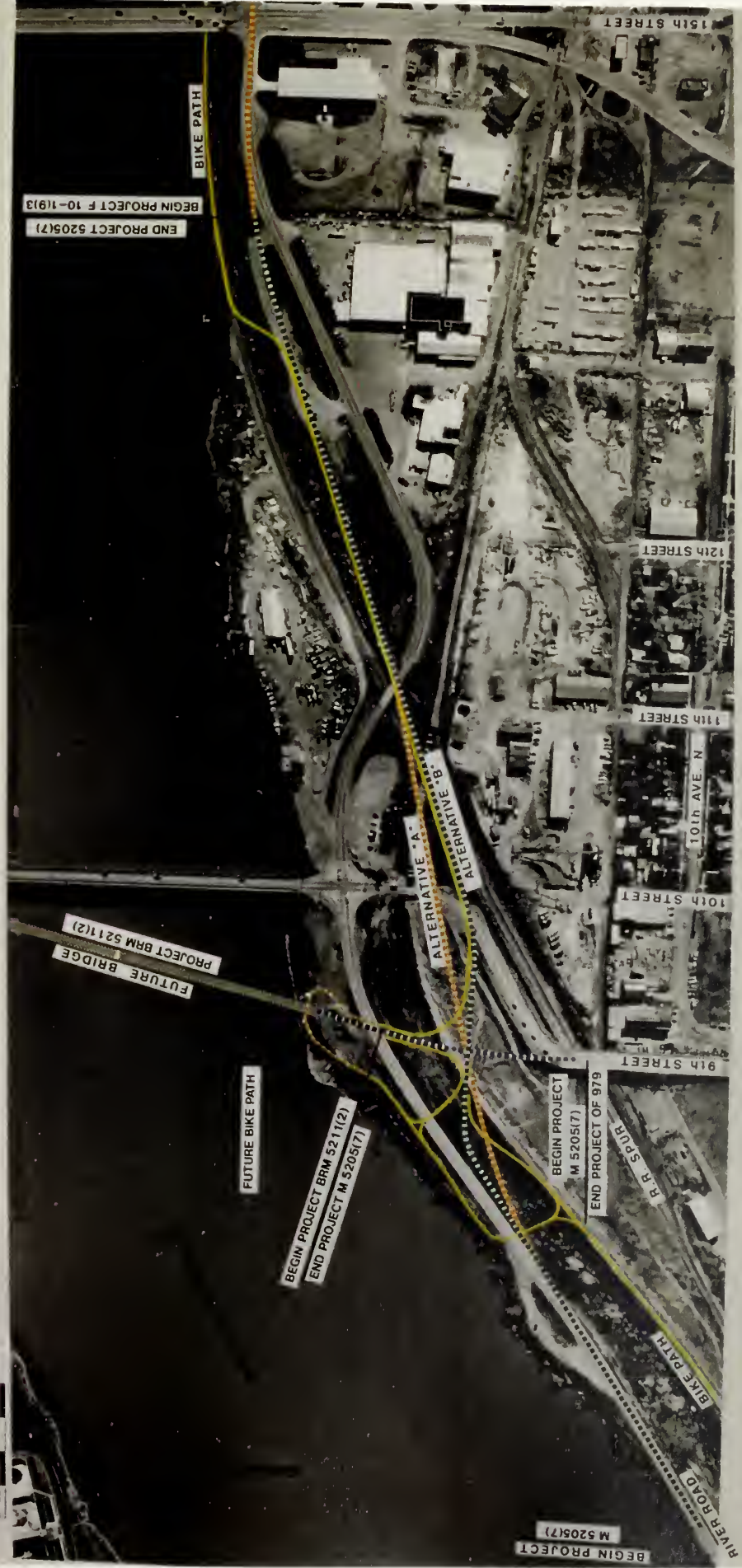


Figure 3-1

Various other alignment alternatives for River Drive have been investigated, but none have been identified that are practical or that have advantages over Alignment A or B, described above.

3.3. LANE CONFIGURATION ALTERNATIVES

3.3.1. 9th Street

A four-lane configuration, which will match the recently completed 9th Street on the south and the proposed new bridge on the north, is proposed for 9th Street (See Figure 3-2). Because of the need to match these two projects on each end, no other lane configuration alternatives are evaluated in detail in this document for 9th Street. Left-turn bays are proposed (both northbound and southbound) on 9th Street at the intersection with River Drive.

3.3.2. River Drive

Two basic lane configurations are under consideration for River Drive in the project area -- a two-lane configuration (one traffic lane in each direction) and a four-lane configuration (two traffic lanes in each direction). A two-lane configuration will be similar to existing conditions and, as indicated in Section 2.2., will not adequately accommodate projected traffic volumes. The two-lane configuration is therefore not evaluated in detail in this document.

As indicated in Sections 2.1. and 2.2., there is a substantial demand for left turns from River Drive to existing and possible future businesses and industries. This demand for left-turns, in the absence of appropriate left-turn lanes, decreases the safety and level-of-service of the roadway.

A four-lane configuration with provisions for left-turns (either single point left-turn lanes or continuous two-way left-turn lanes), as shown on Figure 3-2, will adequately accommodate existing and projected future traffic volumes and patterns on River Drive. This lane configuration is evaluated in detail in this document.

3.4. DESIGN OPTIONS

A ten-foot wide paved bicycle path (See Figure 3-1) is proposed through the project area. The path will begin west of 9th Street at the end of an existing bicycle path; will continue east along the south side of River Drive for a short distance; will cross River Drive through a bicycle underpass to the north side; will follow the north side of River Drive to 9th Street; will cross 9th Street either under the proposed new Missouri River bridge or through a new bicycle underpass; will continue east along the north side of River Drive to a point on an abandoned railroad bed; and will follow the railroad bed to the end of the project. Connections to the intersection of River Drive and 9th Street will be made as shown on Figure 3-1.

Concrete curb and gutter is proposed along both sides of both River Drive and 9th Street. Five-foot wide concrete sidewalk is also proposed on both sides of each street with the following variation:

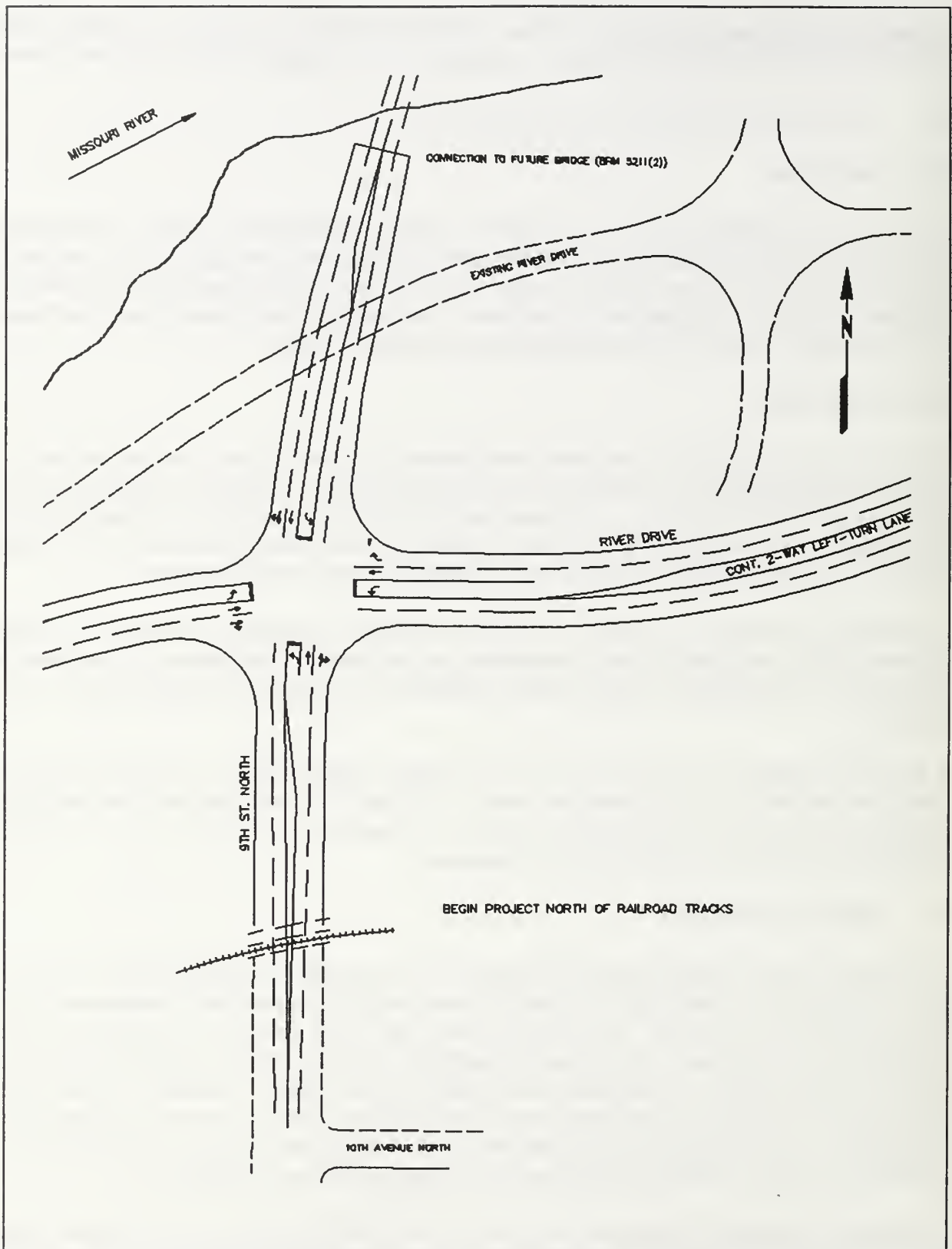


Figure 3-2, Lane Configurations

- Along 9th Street, from River Drive to the proposed new bridge, ten-foot wide concrete sidewalk is proposed on the west side of the street to match the sidewalk configuration proposed for the new bridge.

Traffic Signals will be provided at the new River Drive/9th Street Intersection. The signal and intersection will include pedestrian actuated signals and phases, crosswalks and wheelchair ramps.

3.5. PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

The following combination of alignment alternatives, lane configuration alternatives and design options have been selected as the alternative preferred for the proposed project:

- Alignment Alternative B for River Drive.
- The 4-lane configuration on both River Drive and on 9th Street with a continuous, left-turn median on River Drive.
- A bicycle path generally parallel with River Drive.
- Concrete curb and gutter and sidewalk on both sides of the roadway.
- Provisions for the future extension of 11th Street from its existing end point to the new location of River Drive.

These alternatives have been selected because:

- They meet the purpose and need for the project as described in Section 2.,
- They avoid environmental impacts as evaluated in Section 4, and
- They are favored and supported by the public and agencies -- no substantive opposition to these alternatives has been expressed.

4. AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT AND IMPACTS

The following alignment, lane configuration and design alternatives are evaluated in detail in this section:

- The No-Action Alternative.
- Alignment Alternative B for River Drive.
- The 4-lane configuration on both River Drive and on 9th Street with a continuous, left-turn median on River Drive.
- A bicycle path generally parallel with River Drive.
- Concrete curb and gutter and sidewalk on both sides of the roadway.
- Provisions for the future extension of 11th Street from its existing end point to the new location of River Drive.

4.1. LAND USE AND RIGHT-OF-WAY

Existing Conditions

Land use adjacent to the proposed action includes open park and recreation, commercial and industrial. Much of the land in the project area is abandoned Milwaukee Road Railroad right-of-way that has been transferred to City of Great Falls ownership. To the north of the project is the Missouri River. There are no residences adjacent to the proposed project.

South of the project area, toward downtown Great Falls and the central business district (CBD), the pattern of development is more concentrated, predominantly interspersed residential and commercial development.

Potential Impacts

Direct impacts on land use will include the conversion of land to street right-of-way. Table 4-1 includes an estimate of additional right-of-way required to construct the proposed project.

The area is underdeveloped at this time, perhaps partially due to the poor level-of-service for traffic flow on River Drive and 9th Street. The lack of development may also be because of poor access and limited developable land due to several former railroad corridors through the area. With the implementation of street improvements that improve traffic flow, the rate and type of development in the area may change.

Table 4-1 Right-of-Way Areas

LAND USE TYPE	NEW REQUIRED (Acres)	TO BE ABANDONED (Acres)	NET ADDITIONAL RIGHT-OF-WAY REQUIRED (Acres)
Residential	0	0	0
Commercial	2.0	3.9	-1.9
City Owned*	4.6	0.5	4.1
Agricultural	0	0	0
Parkland	1.8	0.4	1.4
Total	8.4	4.8	3.6

*This land includes former railroad right-of-way and is undeveloped.

With the No-Action Alternative, the area will remain underdeveloped because access and traffic flow through the area is inadequate. No land will be converted to street right-of-way.

Mitigation Measures

Land use planning and enforcement of zoning regulations and ordinances by local governments who have jurisdiction will help encourage development where it is appropriate and desirable and discourage it where it is not. Existing approaches will be consolidated where practical. Construction of new approaches to the roadway will be carefully and strictly controlled by the Montana Department of Transportation and the City of Great Falls. Limited access control is proposed for this project.

4.2. FARMLANDS

There are no farmlands located along the proposed project.

4.3. SOCIAL AND ECONOMICS

Existing Conditions

Table 4-2 provides a summary of population growth in Cascade County and the City of Great Falls. As shown on the table, between 1970 and 1990, the population of Cascade County decreased by five percent, while the populations of the Great Falls area and the City of Great Falls decreased by seven and eight percent, respectively.⁴

The populations of Cascade County and the City of Great Falls are predominantly White (93%), although the proportion of Blacks and American Indians in the population increased between 1980 and 1990. In the City of Great Falls between 1980 and 1990, Blacks increased from 0.5% to one percent and American Indians increased from four to five percent of the population.⁵ (Refer to Table 4-3)

There are no concentrations of minorities that have been identified that might be impacted by the proposed project.

There are no residences located on or near the proposed project so none will be directly impacted.

The following businesses are located adjacent to the proposed project:

- Falls Construction Company
- Missouri River Diner
- Lewis Construction Company
- Robinson Insulation
- Lumber Yard Supply Company
- Pepsi Cola Bottling Company (at the east end of the proposed project)

There are no schools, churches, social service agencies, medical facilities, community centers, police or fire protection facilities that will be directly impacted by the proposed project. Travel to and from these agencies and services will be improved because of the safer, more efficient system that will result from the proposed project. Emergency travel for police, fire protection and emergency services will be improved into and through the project area.

⁴U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. Census of Population and Housing. 1960-1990.

⁵U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. Census of Population and Housing. 1960-1990.

Table 4-2 Total Population: Cascade County and Great Falls (1960-1990)

Area	Population			
	1960	1970	1980	1990
Cascade County	73,420	81,800	80,700	77,690
Great Falls and Great Falls North Census Subdivisions ¹	67,350	75,360	73,110	70,140
City of Great Falls	55,250	60,090	56,730	55,100
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. <u>Census of Population and Housing</u> . 1960-1990.				
¹ Includes Great Falls East and West Census Subdivisions in 1960 and 1970.				

Potential Impacts

The proposed project will not cause division or disruption of residential areas or minority groups.

The proposed improvements will provide a pedestrian/bicycle path and sidewalks and as a result, will improve access to parks and recreation facilities located along the Missouri River. (Refer to Section 4.5 Pedestrians and Bicyclists.)

As indicated in Section 4.17 Construction, some businesses adjacent to the project may be negatively impacted during construction due to inconvenience and delays.

The proposed project may encourage commercial development on private land in the project area because access and visual quality will be improved.

The No-Action Alternative will provide no improvement in traffic flow and will not support expected population and economic growth. With the No-Action Alternative, no construction related impacts on highway-oriented businesses will occur.

Mitigation Measures

Impacts to highway-oriented businesses during construction will be mitigated by the development and implementation of a traffic control plan to allow traffic to be maintained through the area during construction with only brief and infrequent delays.

Table 4-3, Population by Race in Cascade County and Great Falls

Race	Population				Percentage of Total Population			
	Cascade County		City of Great Falls		Cascade County		City of Great Falls ¹	
	1980	1990	1980	1990	1980	1990	1980	1990
White	76,020	72,350	53,610	51,300	94%	93%	95%	93%
Black	980	1,060	360	530	1	1	0.5	1
American Indian	2,670	3,070	2,130	2,550	3	1	1	5
Asian and Pacific Islander	480	790	280	460	1	1	1	1
Other	550	420	360	260	1	1	1	1
Hispanic Origin ¹	1,340	1,400	820	930	2	2	1	2
TOTAL	80,700	77,690	56,730	55,100	100	100	100	100
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. <u>Census of Population and Housing</u> . 1980-1990.								
¹ Hispanic origin is included in categories of racial origin.								

4.4. RELOCATIONS

No relocations of homes, businesses or any other structures or facilities will be required with any of the proposed alternatives for the proposed project.

4.5. PEDESTRIANS AND BICYCLISTS

Existing Conditions

An existing unpaved bike path currently follows along the abandoned railroad grade (Milwaukee Road and Burlington Northern Railroads) throughout most of the project length. An at-grade crossing is located on 9th Street south of existing River Drive.

A new, paved bicycle path is currently being planned and constructed along the Missouri River through the City of Great Falls, including the proposed project area. Portions of the trail have been constructed and are in-use and others, including through most of the project area, are being planned for future construction. Recreational Trails, Inc. (citizen volunteers) and the City of Great Falls have been actively promoting and providing funding for the development of the trail.

Potential Impacts

As described in Section 3.4, the proposed project will include the construction of a bicycle path including underpasses where needed to cross 9th Street and River Drive. With the construction of this path, which will also be used by pedestrians, access and safety for bicyclists and pedestrians will be substantially improved.

Placing the pedestrian/bicycle path in underpasses or under the proposed new Missouri River Bridge may create security concerns -- these areas will not be visible from the roadway and will be difficult for law enforcement agencies to patrol.

Representatives of the Great Falls City-County Planning Board⁶ have indicated that, although there is a need to identify and remain aware of potential security and safety concerns of bicycle/pedestrian underpasses, they feel these concerns should not preclude or jeopardize the provision of these facilities. They have indicated they feel the underpasses provide more benefits to trail users in the form of safer travel conditions and reduced traffic conflicts than any potential security problems created.

With the No-Action Alternative, no beneficial impacts will occur for pedestrians or bicyclists.

Mitigation Measures

The proposed bicycle path will include appropriate signing and striping and, where needed for safety, will be separated from the roadway and the river by fencing.

In the underpasses and under the proposed new Missouri River Bridge, lighting should be installed and maintained for safety and security. Consideration should be given, as suggested by participants in the public scoping, to placing surveillance cameras in these areas to allow law enforcement personnel to monitor them.

4.6. AIR QUALITY

Existing Conditions

As indicated in Section 2.2., the existing River Drive/9th Street Intersection is currently operating at level-of-service (LOS) F which indicates that vehicles are delayed for long periods of time. During this delay time, the vehicles are idling which contributes to carbon monoxide (CO) emissions.

⁶Rangle, Benjamin M., Senior Planner, Great Falls City-County Board, letter dated 17 November 1993.

The proposed action is within the Great Falls air quality study area and is more than 1.5 miles north of the Great Falls/Cascade County CO non-attainment area. This non-attainment area is classified as a "not classified area". This is the least severe of the four levels of non-attainment classifications and means the area has not violated Federal CO standards since at least 1988 and is not subject to the SIP submittal requirements of the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 (CAAA).

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) requested a state implementation plan (SIP) for the area. The City of Great Falls/Cascade County and the Air Quality Bureau of the Montana Department of Health and Environmental Sciences jointly completed an emissions inventory in December, 1989 to satisfy the Phase I requirements of EPA's post-1987 ozone/CO policy. The CAAA were not in place at that time.

The Great Falls/Cascade County area is not in violation of any other Federal Ambient Air Quality Standards.

The 1990 - 2010 Great Falls Transportation Plan Update and the 1993 - 1997 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) include the proposed action. Both documents conform to the current SIP⁷. The TIP specifically states the proposed action will maintain current air quality conditions with no adverse impacts. Therefore, the proposed action complies with the current SIP under 23 CFR 770.⁸

Potential Impacts

Construction activities and equipment may locally affect air quality, but this will be a temporary and short-term condition. There will be no long-term creation of objectionable odors, alteration of air movement, moisture or temperature, or change in climate.

Any of the proposed alternatives except No-Action will result in an improved highway facility that will smooth out the traffic flow and reduce stopping and idling time and, as a result, will also reduce the amount of air pollution emissions from transportation sources. From this standpoint, the proposed action should have a beneficial impact on air quality. Improving the intersection operation to LOS C will substantially reduce idling time which will in turn, substantially reduce CO emissions.

With the No-Action Alternative, no improvements in intersection operation will occur and, as traffic volumes continue to increase, CO emissions will increase. The No-Action Alternative will create no short-term construction related adverse air quality impacts.

⁷This statement is based on formal conformity determinations made by the Great Falls City-County Planning Board (Metropolitan Planning Organization). These conformity determinations were jointly approved by EPA and FHWA.

⁸Ibid.

This proposed action is located in an "unclassifiable"/attainment area of Montana for air quality under 40 CFR 81.327. As this type of project has no adverse impact on regional emissions according to the June 7, 1991 U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) and Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Interim Guidance for the Clean Air Act Amendments -- Section 6.2. and the Appendix -- a carbon monoxide (CO) analysis will not be necessary. Therefore, this proposed action complies with the 1990 Clean Air Act Amendments (23 U.S.C. 176 (c)) during "Phase I" of the "Interim Period".

Mitigation Measures

Asphalt plants and gravel crushers must obtain air quality permits from the Air Quality Bureau of the Montana Department of Health and Environmental Sciences to operate in the State.

Requirements of the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT), Standard Specifications⁹, will be followed to help mitigate dust and other air pollution during construction.

4.7. NOISE

Existing Conditions

A noise analysis has been conducted for the proposed project. Existing noise levels are shown on Table 4-4.

Table 4-4, Existing and Projected Future Noise Levels

DISTANCE FROM STREET CENTERLINE	EXISTING NOISE LEVELS (dBA)	DESIGN YEAR, 2014 NOISE LEVELS (dBA)
75 Feet	66	67
150 Feet	62	63
300 Feet	57	58

⁹Montana Department of Highways, Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction, 1987 Edition.

Potential Impacts

Projected noise levels at each of the monitoring sites for the design year, 2014, are listed on Table 4-4.

As defined by 23 CFR, Part 772, noise impacts occur when:

1. The Noise Abatement Criteria (NAC) threshold level is approached (within one A-weighted decibels [dBA]) or exceeded. The exterior noise abatement threshold for NAC Category B is hourly equivalent sound level ($Leq(h)$) = 67 dBA. Category B includes picnic areas, recreation areas and parks and is therefore applicable to portions of the area surrounding this proposed project.

As indicated on Table 4-4, noise levels are currently below the NAC threshold level but are approaching it within 75 feet of the street centerline. As indicated on the table, noise levels are predicted to remain below the NAC threshold level through the design year, 2014, except within 75 feet of the street centerline where the noise levels are predicted to approximately equal the NAC threshold level. In areas closer than 75 feet, noise levels are predicted to exceed the NAC threshold level.

2. The noise levels resulting from a proposed project substantially exceed (by 10 dBA or greater) the existing noise levels.

As indicated on Table 4-4, none of the noise levels resulting from any of the proposed alternatives at any of the sites will substantially exceed (by 10 dBA or greater) the existing noise levels.

Mitigation Measures

Since noise levels will approach or equal the NAC threshold level within 75 feet of the street centerline, the following mitigation measures have been considered:

1. *Traffic management measures (e.g., traffic control devices and signing for prohibition of certain vehicle types, time-use restrictions for certain vehicle types, modified speed limits and exclusive lane designations).*

These types of noise abatement measures are not considered reasonable and feasible because 1) they will not provide a significant improvement and 2) they are not appropriate for this highway and its historic and projected uses.

2. *Construction of noise barriers within or outside the highway right-of-way.*

All of the existing noise receptors would benefit from the construction of a noise barrier if it was practical to build one. However, barrier construction is not practical in this area and would not be effective due to the necessity for many access openings along these roadways.

3. *Noise insulation of public use or nonprofit institutional structures.*

There are no existing noise receptors that will benefit from this type of abatement measure. This type of measure might be considered should development of any such buildings be planned.

Where practical and feasible, the proposed bicycle/pedestrian trail will be placed over 75 feet from the centerline of the proposed roadways in an effort to reduce trail user exposure to the higher noise levels (above 67 dBA).

In an effort to prevent future traffic noise impacts on currently undeveloped lands, information contained in this document is being furnished to local governments and planning officials in the project area. These officials may consider land use plans, restrictions or regulations that discourage or prevent further development of incompatible activities. They may also require new structures and other facilities to be located and constructed to avoid future noise impacts. Consideration may also be given to encourage or require future developments, where noise impacts are expected, to provide noise barriers or other abatement measures.

4.8. WATER QUALITY

Existing Conditions

Surface water in the project area consists of runoff resulting from storms and from snow melt. River Drive parallels the Missouri River and the proposed new roadway will generally be approximately 100 to 200 feet from the river, and as close as 40 feet from the river (at the project's west end where it connects with the existing roadway). All surface water in the project area drains toward the Missouri River. Ground water in the project area is approximately at the elevation of the river.

Potential Impacts

Some short term construction related water quality impacts may occur. These impacts will be minimal.

The proposed project will result in an increase in the total surface of asphalt pavement which will result in an overall decrease in the permeability of the surface and an increase in the quantity and rate of stormwater runoff from the roadway. The potential will exist for the transport of sediment from the new, wider streets to the river.

The No-Action Alternative will create no adverse or beneficial impacts on water quality.

Mitigation Measures

Storm drainage from the roadway will be collected by an underground storm drainage system which will carry the water to the river.

All work will be in accordance with Section 319 of the Water Quality Act of 1987 (P.L. 100-4). The control of water pollution for both specific and non-point sources will be as described in the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit (P.L. 500).

The Montana Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (MPDES) regulations (ARM 16.20.1314) require a storm water discharge permit for any construction activity in which clearing, grading and excavating will result in the disturbance of greater than five acres total or the disturbance of greater than one acre if located within 100 feet of a surface water body (stream, river or lake). The permit will, therefore, apply to all of the proposed alternatives except No-Action. As part of the permit application process, a Storm Water Erosion Control Plan must be completed and submitted for approval to the Water Quality Bureau of the Montana Department of Health and Environmental Sciences (MDHES/WQB) prior to construction taking place. The objective of the plan is to minimize erosion of disturbed areas during the construction and post construction phase of a project. Careful planning and proper implementation of the plan will lessen the likelihood of pollutants reaching state waters. The plan will become part of the construction plans, specifications and documents. Construction contractors will be required to adhere to it.

A plan for run-on control for hazardous materials at construction sites is also necessary and will be coordinated with and approved by the MDHES/WQB.

The MDT Standard Erosion Control Work Plan¹⁰ will be used as a guide to prepare a specific work plan for the proposed project.

The erosion control work plan will also apply to and be developed for all required borrow sites.

By implementing the mitigation measures described above, it is estimated that none of the proposed alternatives will produce significant amounts of sedimentation in the river.

4.9. WETLANDS

Existing Conditions

There are no wetlands that will be affected by the proposed project.

¹⁰Pioneer Technical Services, Inc. for Montana Department of Transportation, Highway Construction Standard Erosion Control Work Plan, 30 September 1992.

4.10. FLOODPLAINS AND STREAM CROSSINGS

Existing Conditions

Flood boundary and floodplain maps¹¹ have been reviewed. Except for a portion of the proposed bike path if it is constructed under the planned new bridge, the proposed action does not cross any streams or other water bodies and is not located within a defined floodplain or floodway. It is located outside the floodplain and floodway of the Missouri River. A portion of the proposed bike path may pass under and be constructed as part of the proposed 9th - 10th Streets North Connector Bridge.

The Flood Insurance Study of October 1979 indicated a 100-year surface water elevation of 3310.2 feet on the Missouri River at the present 10th St. N. Bridge.

Potential Impacts

This proposed action will not encourage or support any residential or commercial development within any delineated floodplain.

As indicated in Section 4.8., a storm drainage collection and retention system will be constructed to adequately accommodate storm water runoff.

The portion of the proposed bike path that may be located under the south end of the 9th - 10th Streets North Connector Bridge, will be constructed below the 100 year flood elevation of the river and may be affected for short periods. A flood plain permit will be required.

Except for the bike path, no fill material will be placed below the ordinary high water mark of the river or any other stream, lake or wetland. As a result, a Department of the Army permit (under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act) may be required for this project.

No adverse floodplain impacts have been identified.

4.11. FISH AND WILDLIFE

Existing Conditions

A biological resources inventory and report has been completed for this project¹². A copy of the biological resources report is included in Appendix D.

Considerable use is made of the nearby Missouri River by aquatic oriented birds (primarily waterfowl).

¹¹Federal Emergency Management Agency, Flood Boundary and Floodway Map, Cascade County, MT.

¹²Robert L. Eng, Certified Wildlife Biologist, letter and attachments dated 22 September 1993.

Two endangered species, the bald eagle and the peregrine falcon can occur seasonally in the project area.

The bald eagle can be observed quite commonly during the late fall, winter and early spring along the river where they are attracted to food sources in the form of waterfowl and fish. However, the nearest known nest site is several miles southwest of Great Falls along the Missouri River.

The peregrine falcon may be seen as a migrant, although far less frequently than the bald eagle. No nesting pairs are known to exist within 100 miles of the proposed project.

Based on habitat present in the area and the reported distribution of sensitive plants and animals, it has been determined that no sensitive species are present in the area of the proposed project. The database of the Montana Natural Heritage Program has been checked and no recorded occurrences of sensitive species in the project area were found¹³.

Potential Impacts

The proposed project should not affect the aquatic oriented birds (primarily waterfowl) that use the river adjacent to the project area other than a temporary adjustment they may make during construction activities.

No major impacts on the aquatic habitat are anticipated with the proposed project and consequently no change in seasonal use by the bald eagle and the peregrine falcon is expected.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has been consulted and personnel of that agency have indicated that, considering the specific nature and location of the proposed project, they do not believe there will be any project related impacts to threatened and endangered species¹⁴.

The proposed project will have no effect on the bald eagle or the peregrine falcon.

Mitigation Measures

Construction activities will be confined to within the right-of-way of the proposed project. Construction staging areas will be located away from the river to avoid impacts and disturbances to aquatic plants and wildlife.

¹³Cory Craig, Assistant Data Manager, Montana Natural Heritage Program, letter dated 25 October 1993.

¹⁴McMaster, Kemper M., Field Supervisor, Montana Field Office, Fish and Wildlife Service, United States Department of the Interior, letter dated 03 November 1993.

4.12. CULTURAL RESOURCES

Existing Conditions

A cultural resource inventory and evaluation has been completed for this project¹⁵.

Historic sites observed in the project area include portions of the abandoned Great Northern Railway and the Milwaukee Road Railroad. These railroads are excluded from consideration in this document by a programmatic agreement¹⁶.

No other sites eligible for the National Register of Historic Places that might be affected by the proposed project have been identified.

The Montana State Historic Preservation Office has concurred with these findings¹⁷.

4.13. PARKS AND RECREATION

Existing Conditions

The proposed project passes through a portion of Elks Riverside Park.

Gibson Park is located approximately 1/2 mile southwest of the west end of the project; is on the opposite side of the railroad tracks; and will not be impacted by any of the proposed alternatives.

Potential Impacts

Approximately 2.0 acres of parkland will be converted to right-of-way if the proposed project is constructed, and approximately 1.1 acres in four parcels will be isolated and separated from the remainder of the park and may become less usable.

With the construction of the proposed project, including the bicycle path, access will be improved and visual quality in and around the park will be enhanced.

The No-Action Alternative will convert no parkland to street right-of-way and will not improve access to the park. As traffic volumes increase, access to the area will become more difficult.

¹⁵GCM Services, Inc., Cultural Resource Inventory and Evaluation: River Drive - Great Falls, September 1993.

¹⁶Federal Highway Administration, Montana Department of Highways and Montana State Historic Preservation Office, Waiver of Inventory and Evaluation for Some Linear Sites on Selected Montana Department of Highways Projects, January 30, 1991

¹⁷10 September 1993, letter from Edrie Vinson, Chief, MDT Environmental and Hazardous Waste Bureau to Marcella Sherfy, State Historic Preservation Office, with concurrence signed by K. Huppe on 06 October 1993.

Cumulative beneficial impacts should occur due to the development of the bicycle path and landscaping the street right-of-way which should encourage and support other improvements to the existing undeveloped park land and other adjacent land owned by the City of Great Falls.

Mitigation Measures

A final Section 4(f) evaluation was completed for project BRM 5211(2), 9th-10th Street North (connector) Bridge. The final Section 4(f) evaluation identified and described existing parklands, identified impacts which will occur with the proposed project, discussed avoidance alternatives and listed mitigation measures. Since this proposed project will affect additional park land, an additional final Section 4(f) evaluation has been completed and is included in Section 7 of this document.

4.14. HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Existing Conditions

The proposed intersection of 9th Street and River Drive is approximately the location of an old landfill. The City of Great Falls encountered minor wastes when 9th Street was reconstructed to the south of the intersection. The waste had significantly decomposed and was used as fill in the project.

A memorandum from MDT Hazardous Waste Section to MDT Environmental Engineering Section, dated 27 February 1995, is included in Appendix C, Agency comments received.

This project has two sites with known solid waste concerns, however, neither of these sites require action at this point. The first site is located between stations 20+00 and 25+00 and the other is located at station 31+00.

As per the memorandum dated 27 February 1995 (above referenced), "These were the only sites identified that posed a concern for highway construction. Please note them in your environmental document as locations that are fully understood and characterized".

Potential Impacts

Since the construction of the project will consist mostly of fill over the existing ground, only minor amounts of soils containing decomposed solid waste will be removed and most, if not all, of these will be placed in project fills.

Mitigation Measures

In the event that solid waste is encountered that cannot be used for fill, the material will be taken to the City's privately owned landfill.

4.15. VISUAL

Existing Conditions

The existing visual environment includes the existing roadways and the old railroad bed and bridges. Several businesses and two construction material/equipment storage yards are visible from the roadway. Roadway slopes, outside of paved areas, generally include native grasses and vegetation. The abandoned railroad beds and structures still exist in the project area. The existing visual environment also includes the natural environment of the Missouri River and the open land along both its north and south sides.

Potential Impacts

The proposed project will involve replacement of the existing two-lane streets (which include no curb and gutter or sidewalk) with new, 4-lane streets (with curb and gutter and concrete sidewalks on both sides). This new roadway will present a neat, clean appearance with smooth, gentle slopes that blend well with the existing landscape. The project will include the removal and relandscaping of existing railroad beds and structures and other unsightly features. The City of Great Falls and property owners in the area have indicated that the proposed project should have a beneficial impact on visual quality in the area and will make this area a pleasing gateway to the City of Great Falls for travellers from the north.

The No-Action Alternative will have no impact on the visual environment, either beneficial or adverse.

4.16. ENERGY AND COMMITMENTS OF RESOURCES

Existing Conditions

The horizontal and vertical alignments and the poor level-of-service of the existing roadways and intersections contribute to reductions in the driving comfort and efficiency of the existing facility. These features require more frequent accelerations and decelerations, increased idling time and reduced energy efficiency.

Potential Impacts

Construction of any of the proposed alternatives will improve traffic operations and efficiency by providing better alignments, wider roadway and more roadway capacity. This improvement in efficiency and traffic operations will result in fuel savings and a decrease in vehicle wear. The long-term effect of the project should therefore be a decrease in energy use.

Implementation of the proposed action involves a commitment of a range of natural, physical, human and fiscal resources. Land used in the construction of the proposed facility is considered an irreversible commitment during the time period that the land is used for a highway facility. However, if a greater need arises for use of the land or if the highway facility is no longer needed, the land can be converted to another use. At present, there is no reason to believe such a conversion will ever be necessary or desirable.

Considerable amounts of fossil fuels, labor and highway construction materials such as cement, aggregate and bituminous material will be expended. Additionally, large amounts of labor and natural resources will be used in the fabrication and preparation of construction materials. These materials are generally not retrievable. However, they are not in short supply and their use will not have an adverse effect upon continued availability of these resources.

The commitment of these resources is based on the concept that residents in the immediate area, state and region will benefit by the improved quality of the transportation system. These benefits will consist of improved accessibility and safety, savings in time and greater availability of quality services which are anticipated to outweigh the commitment of these resources.

The No-Action Alternative will not improve highway operation and efficiency and will therefore provide no long-term decrease in energy use. The No-Action Alternative will require no commitment of resources.

4.17. CONSTRUCTION

Potential Impacts

Construction related activities will result in some short term adverse impacts which cannot be avoided. These impacts will be temporary and should last only for the duration of construction activities. Possible impacts include:

- detours and temporary surfacing.
- emissions from asphalt plants and crushers,
- dust from construction equipment activities,
- increased noise levels from construction equipment,
- potential for erosion from fresh cut and fill slopes,
- inconvenience to highway users resulting from delays, detours and temporary surfacing.

The No-Action Alternative will create no construction related impacts.

Mitigation Measures

Impacts will be minimized to the extent practical through proper construction practices. Dust will be controlled by watering or other acceptable methods. Construction related erosion will be controlled and slopes will be revegetated as soon as possible.

Gravel and borrow sources for base and surfacing aggregates have not yet been identified. Borrow material removal and gravel pits will be subject to applicable rules and regulations of the Montana Open Cut Mining Act. A mine reclamation plan will be required.

A traffic control plan will be developed to minimize inconvenience to motorists during construction. Traffic delays during construction will be minimized by planning and scheduling.

A temporary connection (detour) between the existing 10th Street North bridge over the Missouri River with the new River Drive may be necessary. If construction of the future bridge project (BRM 5211(2)) is completed before construction of this project, then this temporary connection detour will not be necessary. However, this temporary connection will be designed and included in the plans for this project (STPU 5205(7)).

4.18. UTILITIES

Existing Conditions

The following major utilities exist in the project area:

- A 24" diameter natural gas mainline crossing River Drive west of 9th Street,
- Several smaller gas lines,
- Several small water lines serving businesses in the area,
- Fiber optics and copper cable underground telephone lines,
- A 100 KV overhead power line with several large poles located near the proposed new intersection of River Drive and 9th Street and several smaller power lines,
- An 18 to 30 inch diameter sanitary sewer outfall which parallels and crosses the proposed project in several locations and other smaller sewer lines,
- A 60 inch diameter storm drainage outfall located west of the proposed project.

Potential Impacts

With the proposed project, the 24 inch natural gas line will not be impacted.

The 60 inch diameter storm drainage outfall will also not be impacted except that, as mentioned in Section 4.8., storm drainage from the project may be added to it.

The poles of the 100 KV overhead power line located at the proposed new River Drive/9th Intersection will require relocation.

The telephone cables will require substantial relocation or adjustment in some areas.

The other utilities listed above will remain generally in their existing locations with some minor adjustments required.

The No-Action Alternative will create no impacts on utilities.

Mitigation Measures

The owners of the affected utilities have been notified and project design and development is being coordinated with them. Appropriate adjustments will be designed and constructed to occur with no or only brief interruptions in service.

4.19. CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

As indicated in Section 2.3., several other projects have recently been constructed or are planned for construction in the near future in the project area. These projects will combine with the proposed project to create both adverse and beneficial cumulative impacts including the following:

- The projects will result in substantial improvements to the transportation system in the area.
- The improved transportation system may result in changes to the rate and type of development in the area.
- The projects, some of which may be constructed concurrently, will adversely impact traffic during construction.
- The projects, including the bicycle path, will substantially improve pedestrian and bicycle access to and through the area.
- The projects, during construction, may create short term impacts on air quality in the immediate area. The projects will improve traffic flow which will result in long-term beneficial impacts on air quality.
- The cumulative visual impacts of the several projects in the area should be beneficial and should result in an improved urban visual environment.

5. COMMENTS, COORDINATION AND ISSUES

5.1. COMMENTS AND COORDINATION

Coordination efforts were initiated by the Montana Department of Transportation on 28 May 1993, when a notice of intent was issued by the Department to federal, state and local agencies and affected private organizations and individuals. A list of individuals, groups and agencies receiving a copy of the notice has been prepared and is on file with the Public Hearings Unit of the Montana Department of Transportation.

A public scoping and information meeting was held in Great Falls in the offices of Lumber Yard Supply Company on 21 July 1993 to discuss the proposed action. Preliminary plans and large scale aerial photographs with the proposed improvements overlaid were available for inspection. A presentation was made to explain the proposed project and the environmental review process. A summary of the meeting has been prepared and is included in Appendix A. Public comment was requested and received -- written public comments are included in Appendix B.

A location and design public hearing was held on 20 October 1994 to discuss the environmental assessment and to further solicit comments from the public. A presentation was made to explain the proposed project and the environmental review process. A summary of the meeting has been prepared and is included in Appendix A. Public comment was requested and received -- written public comments are included in Appendix B.

Comments received in response to the distribution of the EA and as a result of the public hearing have been evaluated and incorporated into this updated EA. Where appropriate, clarifications or responses are included. These comments are included in Appendix B - Public comments received.

It has been determined, by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), that the preferred alternative will not create significant adverse environmental impacts, so a finding of no significant impact (FONSI) has been prepared and signed by FHWA.

Written comments from the following local, state or federal agencies have been received and are included in Appendix C of this document:

State Historic Preservation Office
P.O. Box 201202
Helena, MT 59620-1202

Environmental Analysis Branch
Planning Division
Department of the Army
Corps of Engineers, Omaha District
215 North 17th Street
Omaha, NE 68102-4978

Helena Regulatory Branch
Department of the Army
Corps of Engineers, Omaha District
P.O. Box 202301
Helena, MT 59620-2301

Montana Natural Heritage Program
P.O. Box 201800
Helena, MT 59620-1800

Fisheries Division
Montana Department of
Fish, Wildlife and Parks
Helena, MT 59620

Parks Division
Montana Department of
Fish, Wildlife and Parks
Helena, MT 59620

Great Falls City-County Planning Board
Civic Center
P.O. Box 5021
Great Falls, MT 59403-5021

Ecological Services
Fish and Wildlife Service
U.S. Department of Interior
100 N. Park, Suite 320
Helena, MT 59601

United States Department of the Interior
Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20240

5.2. ISSUES

The following summarizes issues that have been identified during the public scoping process and during engineering and environmental studies. Where applicable, sections of the environmental assessment where these issues are addressed are indicated.

1. The roadway should be constructed to, as much as practical, match the elevation of surrounding terrain to facilitate access. 1.
2. Extension of 11th or 12th Street to connect with River Drive is a good idea because it will significantly improve access to the area and to several existing businesses. 1.
3. Extension of 11th or 12th Street seems too difficult -- consider instead improving access via 10th Avenue North. 1.
4. The proposed new streets should be lighted. 1.
5. Keep the River Drive/9th Street Intersection far enough south to be able to construct adequate truck turning radii. 1., 3.2.
6. Access for large trucks to Falls Construction, Lewis Construction and Pepsi Bottling Company is very important. 1., 3.2.
7. Reconstructing River Drive and 9th Street to improve safety is a good idea and is necessary. 2.1.
8. Trucks (gravel, concrete, dump trucks) will make heavy use of the proposed new streets and the streets should be designed to accommodate them. 2.2.
9. Proper ingress and egress for surrounding landowners will be important. 3.3.
10. It will be best to provide an angle of intersection of 9th Street with River Drive as close as possible to 90° as possible -- this is more important than providing flatter horizontal curves. 3.4., 4.5.
11. Effects on businesses during project construction is a concern. 4.3., 4.17.
12. Security for pedestrians and bicyclists using underpasses or crossing under the new Missouri River Bridge is an important consideration. Consider lighting and an "electric eye" to monitor the crossings night and day. 4.5.
13. The Great Falls Recreational Trails Committee would like to be involved with the proposed project with regards to the bicycle path. They would like to provide input and suggestions and review project plans and comment on them as they are developed. 4.5.

14. Fencing and other safety measures should be provided to provide separation between the pedestrian/bicycle path and the roadway. 4.5.
15. Consideration should be given to how the connection will be made between the pedestrian/bicycle path under the proposed new Missouri River Bridge with the 10 foot wide walkway on the proposed new bridge. 4.5.
16. Placing the proposed bicycle trail under the proposed Missouri River Bridge will be hazardous because of bird droppings, vagrant encounters and personal safety. 4.5.
17. Safety of River's Edge Trail users is very important. At-grade crossings with city streets should be avoided. The trail should be placed where it avoids, as much as possible, commercial and other busy driveways. The trail should be constructed so that, where driveways must be crossed, they are adequately visible. 4.5.
18. The proposed bicycle path should stay as close as possible to the high bank of the Missouri River. 4.5.
19. Under the authority of Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, Department of the Army permits are required for the placement of fill material below the ordinary high water mark of the nation's rivers, streams, lakes or in wetlands. 4.10
20. The area of the existing "S" curve is to be abandoned on 9th Street and will provide an excellent area for additional parkland. 4.13.
21. The area surrounding the proposed project should be landscaped with grass and plants indigenous to the area. Use large rocks to give the trail some character. Benches, tables, wood signs, mileage markers and message signs should be constructed similar to those placed on the lower trail. 4.13.
22. Consider an automatic drip watering system for trees. 4.13.
23. To mitigate for the loss of parkland that will occur with the proposed project, consider landscaping remaining undeveloped parkland in the area. 4.13.
24. Interest has been expressed in using enhancement funds provided by the Intermodal Surface Transportation and Efficiency Act for improving parklands and adjacent lands. 4.13.
25. The proposed project area is above an old garbage dump which consists of large vertical fills of ashes and cinders. 4.14.

26. Portions of the project area were once a city dump. The proposed improvements will provide an excellent opportunity to enhance this area aesthetically. 4.14., 4.15.
27. There is a private asbestos cement water line owned by Falls Construction that may be affected by the proposed project. 4.14., 4.18.
28. Construction of the proposed project will significantly improve the visual quality of the area. 4.15.
29. Coordination with and involvement of adjacent landowners during project development and construction will be very important. 4.17., 5.1.
30. There is a large natural gas mainline under River Drive which may conflict with portions of the proposed project. 4.18.
31. There are three large power poles at the proposed new intersection of River Drive and 9th Street. They will have to be relocated. 4.18.
32. The extension of 11th Street North is outside the scope of work for this project. However, curb turns will be carried out to the right-of-way limits of River Drive to accommodate a future extension of 11th Street North. 1.0 4.0 7.3
33. An irrigation system will be installed under this project by MDT. The maintenance of said system will be the responsibility of the City of Great Falls. 7.4

6. LIST OF PREPARERS

This environmental assessment was prepared by MDT and the Federal Highway Administration with assistance from Morrison-Maierle/CSSA. The primary agencies and individuals involved include the following:

MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

R. Doug Morgan, Consultant Design Engineer, Consultant Design Section

Sam Naseem, Assistant Consultant Design Engineer, Consultant Design Section

Joel M. Marshik, P.E., Manager, Environmental Services

FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

Dale W. Paulson, Environment and Project Development Engineer

MORRISON-MAIERLE/CSSA

Mike Wagner, Project Manager

Brad Peterson, Environmental Assessment Preparation

7. FINAL SECTION 4(f) EVALUATION

Title 23 of the Code of Federal Regulations 771.135, Section 4(f) (49 USC 303) of the Department of Transportation Act states that "The Administration may not approve the use of land from a significant publicly owned park, recreation area, or wildlife and waterfowl refuge or any significant historic site unless a determination is made that:

- (i) There is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of land from the property; and
- (ii) The action includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the property resulting from such use."

It has been determined that use of land is constituted by the following:

1. When land from a Section 4(f) site is acquired for a transportation project or when there is occupancy of the land by easement, lease or other agreement. This type of use is referred to in this document as a direct use of Section 4(f) land.
2. When the proximity of the transportation project creates impacts that substantially impair the capability to perform any of the site's vital functions. This type of use is referred to in this document as a constructive use of Section 4(f) land.

This final Section 4(f) evaluation has been prepared to identify Section 4(f) properties; identify and evaluate uses of Section 4(f) land that may be required; discuss avoidance alternatives that have been considered; identify appropriate measures to minimize harm; and document coordination that has occurred.

The following sections of the EA are hereby referenced and made a part of this final Section 4(f) evaluation:

- A description of the proposed action (Section 1.).
- A description of the purpose and need for the proposed action (Section 2.).
- A description of alternatives under consideration and identification and justification for the preferred alternative (Section 3.).
- A description of the affected environment and identification and evaluation of potential impacts (Section 4.).
- A summary of comments and coordination that have been received and conducted for the proposed action (Section 5.).

7.1. SECTION 4(f) PROPERTIES

Elks' Riverside Park includes approximately 40 acres and is located along the southeast bank of the Missouri River from 1st Avenue North to 9th Street in the City of Great Falls.

The park is owned by the City of Great Falls. The City purchased the property from the Benevolent & Protective Order of Elks, Lodge #214 (BPOE) in August, 1966. The City has determined that this park is significant for Section 4(f) purposes¹⁸.

The park is bordered on the southeast by former railroad right-of-way which, in the area of the proposed action, is now owned by the City of Great Falls. This land has not been designated as park land but the City of Great Falls has endorsed a plan for future use as a recreational path.

The park is used by the public for softball, picnics, sunbathing, tennis, horseshoe pitching and other uses. The portion of the park affected by the proposed action is undeveloped. The City of Great Falls has indicated that this portion of the park has not been developed due to the size and configuration of this tip of park land and due to roadway and other railway uses nearby.

The park is open and unfenced -- access to the park is provided along River Drive which traverses the park for most of its length. There are parking areas located along River Drive southwest of the project area to provide access to the park, but none in the area of the proposed project.

Bicycle and pedestrian trails currently exist in the southwestern and central portions of the park, but not in the area of the proposed action.

The deed conveying the park land property from the BPOE to the City of Great Falls¹⁹ states:

".....the whole and every part thereof shall be occupied, used or held for park and recreational purposes.....as may be determined by theCity of Great Falls.....but upon ceasing to be so held, used.....as to the whole or any part, this conveyance shall to the extent of the breach become void and no longer in force....."

In 1991, the City and the BPOE signed an agreement releasing one acre, more or less, from these covenants for the proposed Project BRM 5211(2), 9th - 10th Streets North Connector Bridge²⁰.

¹⁸Lawton, John, City Manager, City of Great Falls, letter dated 14 January 1991.

¹⁹Bargain and Sale Deed for Park Purposes, 15 August 1966, Reel 92, Document 624.

²⁰Agreement and Partial Release of Restrictive Covenants, 18 June 1991, BPOE and City of Great Falls, Reel 230, Book 496.

7.2. USE OF SECTION 4(f) PROPERTIES

An environmental assessment (EA) and final Section 4(f) evaluation were completed and approved for Project BRM 5211(2), 9th - 10th Streets North Connector Bridge which will include a new bridge over the Missouri River. The final Section 4(f) evaluation indicated that the connecting streets to the bridge would require a direct use 0.764 acres of Elks' Riverside Park which would be converted to right-of-way and a constructive use of 0.454 acres which would be impaired because of isolation from the remainder of the park.

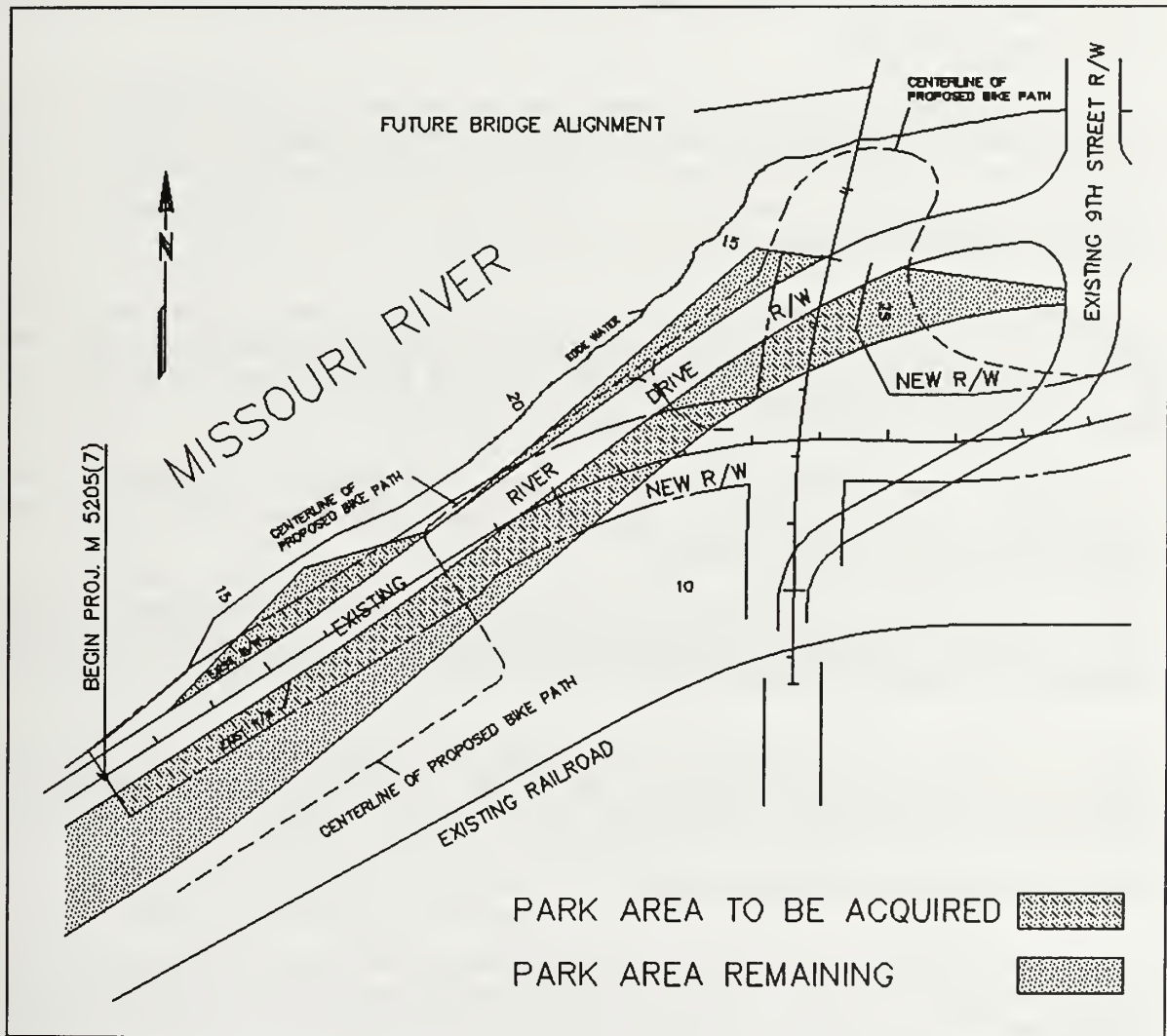


Figure 7-1, Affected Park Land

With the proposed project (River Drive - 9th to 15th Street), which will include construction of the connecting streets to the bridge, more detailed design and evaluation has been completed indicating that more park land will be used than identified with the final Section 4(f) evaluation for the bridge. It is now estimated that the construction of the bridge and connecting streets will require a direct use (conversion to street right-of-way) of approximately 2.0 acres of park land (approximately 5 % of the total area of the park) and will require a constructive use (isolate and impair the use of) approximately 1.1 acres (See Figure 1) in four parcels. Two of the four parcels were already separated from the remainder of the park by the existing roadway. The City of Great Falls has indicated a desire to retain ownership of these isolated parcels and to develop and maintain them. The proposed project will not interfere with any future development of other areas of the park.

As indicated in the environmental assessment, the Noise Abatement Criteria (NAC) threshold level is approached (within one A-weighted decibels [dBA]) or exceeded. The exterior noise abatement threshold for NAC Category B is hourly equivalent sound level ($L_{eq}(h)$) = 67 dBA. Category B includes picnic areas, recreation areas and parks and is therefore applicable to the park land adjacent to the proposed street project.

As indicated in the environmental assessment, noise levels are currently approximately 66 dBA within 75 feet of the street centerline and are at 62 dBA 150 feet from the centerline. Noise levels are predicted increase to 67 dBA within 75 feet of the street centerline but will remain below the 67 dBA NAC threshold level outside 75 feet.

The proposed 4-lane roadways will create a greater visual intrusion than the existing 2-lane roadways but, with proposed sidewalk, curb and gutter and landscaping, will provide a visually pleasing urban street and park land area.

Since the portion of the park near the proposed project is undeveloped, noise and visual impacts will not result in a constructive use of park land because they will not impair the capability to perform any of the site's vital functions.

The City of Great Falls has indicated that, as a result of the initiation of plans for the proposed street improvement project, interest has been focused toward this park for landscaping and beautification to visually improve the area²¹.

7.3. AVOIDANCE ALTERNATIVES

As indicated in Section 3. of the EA, several alternatives have been considered and evaluated. In Section 3. of the EA, the preferred alternative is also identified and reasons for its selection are described. The following is a brief description of the preferred alternative and a description of other alternatives and why they were not selected.

²¹Rangle, Benjamin M., Senior Planner, Great Falls City-County Board, letter dated 17 November 1993.

The following combination of alignment alternatives, lane configuration alternatives and design options have been selected as the alternative preferred for the proposed project:

- Alignment Alternative B (See Figure 3-1) for River Drive.
- The 4-lane configuration on both River Drive and on 9th Street with a continuous, left-turn median on River Drive.
- A bicycle path generally parallel with River Drive.
- Concrete curb and gutter and sidewalk on both sides of the roadway.
- Provisions for the future extension of 11th Street from its existing end point to the new location of River Drive.

The No-Action Alternative was not selected because it does not meet the purpose and need for the project as stated in Section 2. of the EA.

The alignment of 9th Street was effectively established by the completion of the construction of 9th Street south of the railroad and with the determination of the alignment for the new bridge (Project BRM 5211(2)). No additional alternatives were considered for the alignment of 9th Street because none were identified that are practical and feasible or that will reduce the amount of park land impacted.

For River Drive, Alignment A (See Figure 3-1) was considered but was not selected as the preferred alignment alternative because it would have a poor angle of intersection with 9th Street and had no advantages over Alignment B. It would use approximately the same amount of park land as Alignment Alternative B. Various other alignment alternatives for River Drive were investigated, but none were identified that are practical and feasible or that have advantages over Alignment A or B.

The two-lane configuration was not selected for 9th Street because it will not adequately accommodate existing and projected future traffic volumes and because of the need to match the recently completed 9th Street on the south and the proposed new bridge on the north. The two-lane configuration was not selected for River Drive because it will not adequately accommodate existing and projected future traffic volumes.

The continuous left-turn median on River Drive is considered necessary to improve safety and to accommodate the substantial number of left turns from the street to existing and future businesses and industries along the street. The left-turn bays on 9th Street at its intersection with River Drive are considered necessary to improve safety and adequately accommodate the substantial numbers of existing and projected left-turns.

The bicycle path is considered important to accommodate substantial numbers of bicyclists and pedestrians in the area, to connect with existing or planned bicycle/pedestrian paths adjacent to the project area and, as mentioned in Section 7.4. of this final Section 4(f) evaluation, to serve as mitigation for the impacts of the proposed action on park lands.

Concrete curb and gutter and sidewalk are proposed to reduce the amount of right-of-way (including park land) required, to provide a visually pleasing and safe street in this mostly urban and park land area and to improve drainage.

The extension of 11th Street is considered important to provide access to existing land, businesses and residences in this area of the City. The extension of 11th Street has no impact on park land.

7.4. MEASURES TO MINIMIZE HARM

As proposed by the City of Great Falls, a bicycle/pedestrian path (part of the preferred alternative as described in Section 7.3. of this final Section 4(f) evaluation and Section 3.5. of the EA) will be constructed to compensate for park land used as a result of both this proposed project (Project No. M 5205(7)) and the future 9th - 10th Streets North (connector) Bridge (Project BRM 5211(2)).

All embankments on the new roadways, including areas outside the new right-of-way, will be shaped to blend into the surrounding terrain and will be seeded with grasses and vegetation complementary to the area.

In addition to the above, the City of Great Falls has proposed additional landscaping features to help minimize harm including an automatic sprinkler system, grass seeding, shrubs and trees and possibly wild flower seeding²². The Montana Department of Transportation has concurred with and agreed to implement this proposal.²³

7.5. COORDINATION

A final Section 4(f) evaluation was completed and approved by the Montana Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration in March 1992 for the Project BRM 5211(2), 9th - 10th Streets North Connector Bridge. This document addressed the impacts of the bridge and the required connector streets to the park land and identified appropriate mitigation measures. The preparation and approval of this document involved coordination with the City of Great Falls and other local, state and federal agencies and resulted in the determination of an appropriate plan to minimize harm to park land.

Coordination efforts for the proposed action (STPU 5205(7) River Drive - 9th to 15th Street), which will construct the required connector streets for the above bridge, are described and documented in Section 5. of the EA.

²²Rangel, Benjamin M., Senior Planner/Project Manager, Great Falls City-County Planning Board, letter dated 18 March 1994.

²³Morgan, Doug, Montana Department of Transportation, letter dated 24 March 1994.

During the preparation of the Section 4(f) evaluation for the bridge, representatives of the City of Great Falls (owner of the park), were involved and provided various comments and suggestions. The City of Great Falls has indicated that the park land impacted has not been developed or actively used as park and that this has been in large part due to the size and configuration of this tip of park land and due to roadway and railway uses nearby. The Great Falls City Commission unanimously endorsed the "Riverfront Recreational Corridor" conceptual plan. Under the plan, park land and abandoned railroad right-of-way near 9th Street are proposed for use as a recreational path. To mitigate for impacts of the bridge project and this project (Project No. M 5205(7)) on park land, the City has proposed that the pedestrian/bicycle path be constructed.²⁴

The City also has determined that, pursuant to 23 CFR 771.135, Elks Riverside Park is a significant park and recreational area. The City has indicated that potential for mitigation lies with the addition of landscaping and related improvements to this undeveloped portion of the park²⁵ and has proposed a specific mitigation plan as described in the previous section.

Representatives of the City have participated in all stages of the project including:

- Development of the project scope and preliminary planning.
- The public scoping meeting held on 21 July 1993.
- Meetings held with landowners, MDT representatives, utility companies and others.
- Representatives of the City have reviewed the environmental assessment and have provided comments.
- Representatives of the City have reviewed this final Section 4(f) evaluation and have had the opportunity to comment on it.
- Representatives of the City have had extensive involvement in the development of the location and design of the bicycle/pedestrian path.

A location and design public hearing was held on 20 October 1994 to discuss the environmental assessment, the draft Section 4(f) evaluation, the impacts to park land and other potential environmental impacts. Additional comments from the public, the City of Great Falls and other agencies has been solicited and are included in the Appendices.

²⁴Lawton, John, City Manager, City of Great Falls, letter dated 14 January 1991.

²⁵Lawton, John, City Manager, City of Great Falls, letter dated 05 March 1991.

The BPOE has indicated that the direct use and constructive use required for the proposed project, as described in previous sections of this final Section 4(f) evaluation, complies with the agreement between BPOE and the City of Great Falls dated 18 June 1991 and that the agreement does not require revision²⁶.

Following pages include copies of correspondence and documents relevant to this final Section 4(f) evaluation.

Based upon the above considerations, there is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of the land from the Section 4(f) properties and the proposed action includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the Section 4(f) properties resulting from such use.

The Department of the Interior concurs with the above statement in a letter dated 31 March 1995. This letter is included in SECTION 4(F) CORRESPONDENCE AND DOCUMENTS, beginning on the next page of this document. This letter is also included in Appendix C - AGENCY COMMENTS RECEIVED, of this document.

²⁶Trustees of B.P.O. Elks Lodge No. 214, Statement of Concurrence signed 03 and 04 March 1994.

SECTION 4(F) CORRESPONDENCE AND DOCUMENTS



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

*Copy sent to
Carmichael
SAN 4/7/95*

ER-95/0042

MAR 31 1995

RECEIVED

APR 14 1995

MORRISON-MAIERLE/CSSA, INC.

Mr. Henry D. Honeywell
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
301 South Park Street
Drawer 10056
Helena, Montana 59626-0056

Dear Mr. Honeywell:

This is in response to the request for the Department of the Interior's comments on the Draft Environmental Assessment/Section 4(f) Evaluation for River Drive, 9th Street to 15th Street, Great Falls, Cascade County, Montana.

We concur that there is no feasible and prudent alternative to the proposed project. We also concur with the proposed measures to minimize harm to Elks' Riverside Park in the City of Great Falls.

The Department of the Interior has no objection to Section 4(f) approval of this project by the Department of Transportation.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide these comments.

Sincerely,

Willie R. Taylor
Director, Office of Environmental
Policy and Compliance

cc: Mr. Doug Morgan, P.E.
Consultant Design Engineer
Montana Department of Transportation
2701 Prospect Avenue
Post Office Box 201001
Helena, Montana 59620-1001

BGP ————— Maw —————

RECEIVED

MAR 15 1994

MORRISON — MAIERLE/CSSA, INC

GREAT FALLS CITY-COUNTY PLANNING BOARD
SERVING THE COUNTY OF CASCADE AND CITY OF GREAT FALLS, MONTANA

March 8, 1994

Mr. Doug Morgan, P.E.
Consultant Design Engineer
Montana Department of Transportation
Helena, Montana 59620

Re: River Drive 9th-15th Street
M 5205 (7)
Control 2178

Dear Mr. Morgan:

The City of Great Falls contacted B.P.O. Elks Lodge No. 214 regarding additional park land impacts by the referenced project. The Lodge concurs that the agreement between the City and the Lodge doesn't require revision.

Attached for your information and records is a copy of a "Statement of Concurrence", as signed by the Trustees of the Elks Lodge on March 3, 1994.

If you have any questions, please contact me.

Sincerely,



Benjamin M. Rangel
Senior Planner

BMR:jp

Attachment (1)

cc: Gayle Morris, Mayor
John Mooney, Planning Director
Gene Stettler, District Engineer, MDT
Jim Young, Engineer's Office
Jerry Sepich, Park & Rec. Director
John Lawton, City Manager
Dave Gliko, City Attorney

STATEMENT OF CONCURRENCE
REGARDING ELK'S RIVERSIDE PARK

The Trustees of B.P.O. Elks Lodge No. 214 do hereby acknowledge receipt of the letter of explanation, dated February 15, 1994, and do hereby concur that the additional park land taking complies with the "one acre, more or less" condition included in the agreement between the Elks Lodge and the City of Great Falls, dated June 18, 1991. Further, we concur that said agreement does not require revision and continues to represent its initial intent, as well as the interests of the Elks Lodge.

Signed: *Robert A. Green*

Dated: *March 3-1994*

John R. Summer

Dated: *3-3-94*

Frank R. Hunt

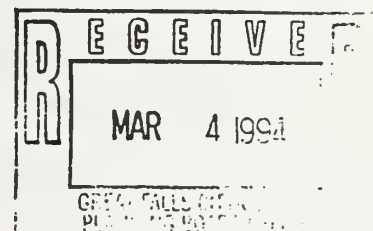
Dated: *3-3-94*

Dennis J. Painter

Dated: *3-3-94*

Conrad Y. Stueck

Dated: *3-4-94*



GREAT FALLS CITY-COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

SERVING THE COUNTY OF CASCADE AND CITY OF GREAT FALLS, MONTANA

March 18, 1994

Mr. Doug Morgan, P.E.
Consultant Design Engineer
Consultant Design Section
Montana Department of Transportation
Helena, Montana 59620

Re: River Drive 9th-15th Street
M 5205 (7)
Control 2178

Dear Mr. Morgan:

Date Recd. Preconst.	
Act	Info
	MAIL ROUTE
	30 Preconst Engr
	30 Assistant
	30 Office Mgr
	31 Safety Mgmt.
	32 Road Design
	33 Environment
	34 Hydraulics
	35 Survey & Mapping
	36 Traffic Eng.
	37 Traffic Operations
	39 Consultant Dsn.
	E.W. Stettler
	T.E. Martin
	Consultant
	File

This letter is provided on behalf of the City of Great Falls and for purposes of presenting park land mitigation measures for the Section 4 (f) Evaluation.

It is understood that the bicycle/pedestrian path will be constructed as a mitigation measure and has been previously approved as part of the mitigation plan in the Section 4 (f) Evaluation for Project BRM 5211 (2), 9th-10th Street Connector Bridge. It was stated in that plan that "all embankments on the new roadways, including areas outside the new right-of-way will be shaped to blend into the surrounding terrain. All these areas will then be seeded with grasses and vegetation complementary with the area."

The nature and extent of landscaping proposed herein to mitigate Project M 5205 (7), River Drive 9th-15th Streets are viewed as an extension of and to further complement the previously described and agreed to mitigation measures.

The City of Great Falls and others in the community, including other property owners in the area of the proposed project strongly feel that landscaping should be an integral element of the roadway project. The City of Great Falls feels landscaping should specifically include an automatic sprinkler system, grass seeding, shrubs and trees. Wild flower seeding may also be appropriate in certain areas.

It is herein proposed that landscaping be installed under two separate but distinctly integrated phases. All of which are intended to mitigate the park land impacts associated with the River Drive project.

Mr. Doug Morgan, P.E.

Page 2

March 18, 1994

Phase I would entail installation of a "base" sprinkler system, hydro-seeding and limited tree plantings within the right of way of the proposed project. The associated costs would be included within the overall cost of the roadway project and be funded with STP Urban funds. The following cost estimate, as prepared by the City Parks and Recreation Department is provided. The attached display (Exhibit A) generally illustrates the area proposed to be landscaped under this phase. The exception is the tree plantings. These would be planted in the right of way on both sides of the new roadway between 11th and 15th Streets and be located on about a fifty foot spacing.

Phase I

Sprinkler System (Materials and Installation)	\$30,000
Engineering Costs	5,000
Topsoil (Installed)	14,630
Seed Bed Preparation	3,500
Seed Mix (Installed)	2,000
120 Bags Hydro-Mulch (Installed)	900
64 Trees @ \$220 each	<u>14,080</u>
PHASE I TOTAL:	\$70,110

The estimate is based on a sprinkler system and seeded area of about 2.5+ acres.

Phase II would entail installation of an "extended" sprinkler system. This would be an extension of the "base" system installed under Phase I. The installation of hydro-seeding, trees and shrubs would also be included in that area beyond the roadway right of way but within park land and other city owned land. It is proposed that Phase II be funded under a Transportation Enhancement Project initiated and sponsored by the MDT Great Falls District Office for use of MDT's annual allocation of enhancement funds. The following cost estimate, as prepared by the City Parks and Recreation Department is provided. The attached display (Exhibit A) generally illustrates the area proposed to be landscaped under this phase.

Phase II

Sprinkler System (Materials and Installation)	\$ 46,240
Engineering Cost	6,936
Topsoil (Installed)	34,100
Seed Bed Preparation	8,300
286 Bags Hydro-Mulch (Installed)	2,150
Seed Mix (Installed)	4,800
89 Trees @ \$220 each	19,580
320 Shrubs @ \$10 each	<u>3,200</u>
PHASE II TOTAL:	\$125,306

The estimate is based on a sprinkler system and seeded area of about 6.5+ acres.

Mr. Doug Morgan, P.E.

Page 3

March 18, 1994

Regarding the trees and shrub plantings, the Parks and Recreation Department specifies the following.

Trees will be located on about a fifty foot spacing and/or cluster plantings and will be two inch caliper balled and burlapped trees. The trees will be contractor supplied and planted with the city furnishing mulch for around the base of each tree. Trees will be native or exotic types which are drought and site tolerant and have a one year maintenance and guarantee period.

Shrubs will be planted in four beds generally located in each corner of the new 9th Street and River Drive intersection. They will be planted in a mass planting and set back from the intersection so as not to interfere with site distance requirements. It is anticipated the plantings may aid in controlling snow accumulation at the intersection. As with trees, the shrubs will be native or exotic types which are tolerant of drought and poor planting sites and have a one year maintenance and guarantee period. The City will furnish mulch for the mass plantings.

Additionally, the remainder of roadway right of way within the scope of the project that is not specifically landscaped under Phases I and II should be seeded with a drought tolerant species of grass such as blue gramma, sheep fescue, etc. In certain areas on slopes where mowing may be difficult, wild flower seeds should be mixed with the grass seeds to help enhance the areas. Approximate cost is 6 cents per square yard for grass seed and 13 cents per square yard for wild flower seed.

As stated in previous correspondence, the City of Great Falls will maintain the landscaped areas, including sprinkler system.

This landscape and mitigation proposal is presented for MDT consideration. In time, it may be appropriate for MDT and City personnel to meet to discuss some of the specifics of this landscape proposal and the coordination of its installation with the overall roadway project.

Please contact me if you have any questions. We look forward to your favorable response.

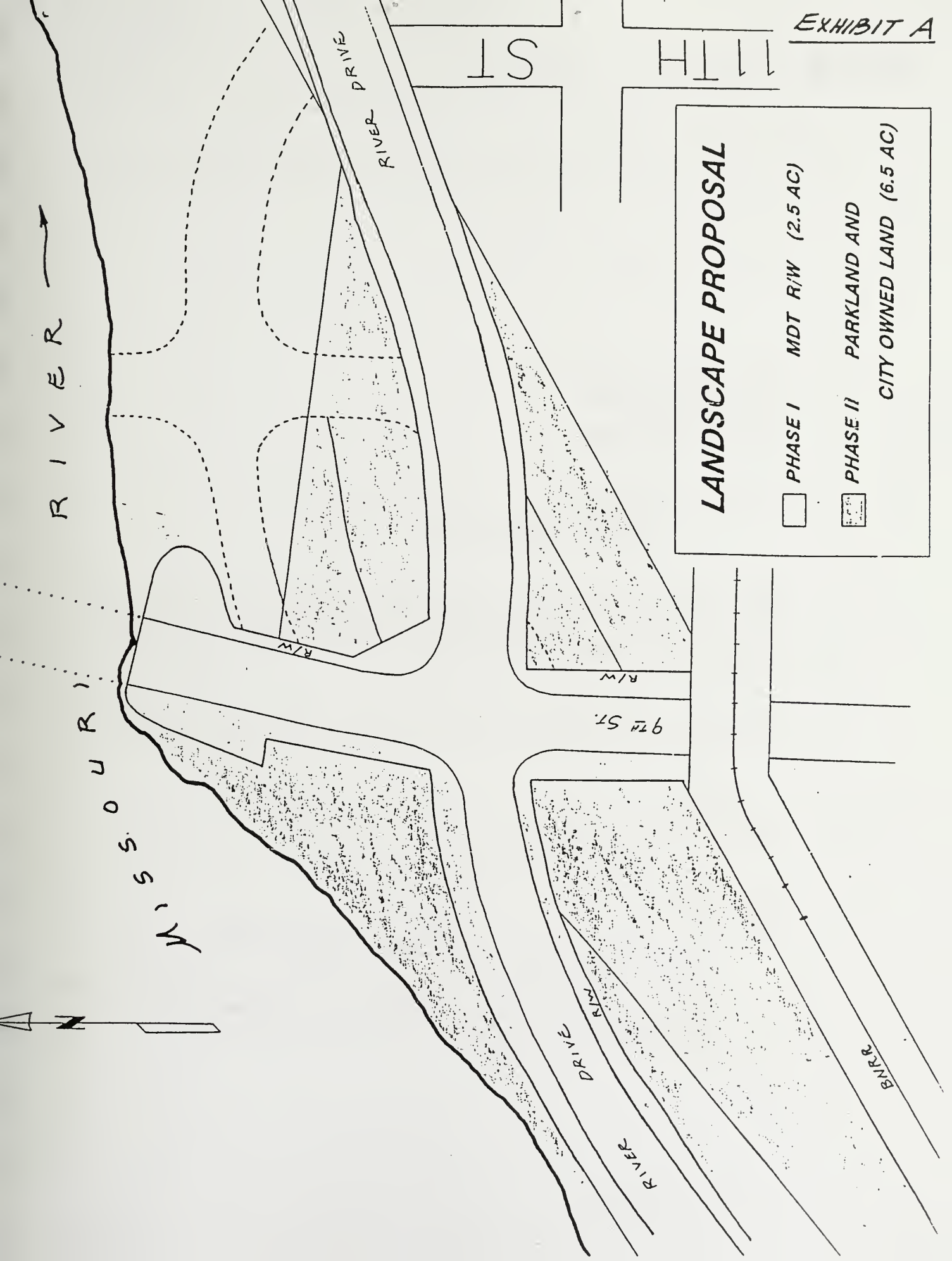
Sincerely,



Benjamin M. Rangel
Senior Planner/Project Manager

BMR:jp

cc: Jerry Sepich, Parks and Rec. Director
John Mooney, Planning Director
Jim Young, Engineer's Office
Gene Stettler, MDT-Great Falls
John Lawton, City Manager



LANDSCAPE PROPOSAL

PHASE I MDT R/W (2.5 AC)

PHASE II PARKLAND AND CITY OWNED LAND (6.5 AC)



March 24, 1994

Morrison-Maierle/CSSA, Inc.
910 Helena Avenue
P.O. Box 6147
Helena, MT 59604

Subject: M 5205(7)
River Drive - Great Falls
Control Number 2178

The enclosed letter from the City of Great Falls indicates the extent of the landscaping required with this project. Their request is reasonable and we advise you to prepare landscaping plans incorporating City's recommended phase I work.

The recommended plan may be used as a part of the mitigation measure in the Section 4(f) evaluation for this project.

Doug Morgan, P.E.
Consultant Design Engineer

39-RDM:SAN:sn.b5
Enclosure

cc: C. S. Peil, P.E., Preconstruction Engineer
E. W. Stettler, P.E., District Engineer-Great Falls
B. M. Rangel, The City of Great Falls
G. J. Stockstad, Acting Chief, Env. & Haz. Waste Bureau
Dick R. McIntyre, P.E., Hydraulics Engineer
Doug Morgan, P.E., Consultant Design Engineer
Preconstruction File

APPENDIX A - NOTICE OF INTENT AND PUBLIC HEARING SUMMARY

Following pages include summaries of the public scoping meeting and the Location and Design Public Hearing that have been held for the proposed project.

NOTICE OF INTENT

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS TO RIVER DRIVE, M 5205(7) CASCADE COUNTY, MONTANA

This notice of intent is being issued to advise the public that the Montana Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration will prepare an environmental assessment (EA) on a proposal to improve the existing River Drive Road beginning approximately 1500 feet west of 9th Street North and extending along River Drive to end approximately 500 feet west of 15th Street. The proposed project will consist of upgrading the existing 2-lane road into a 4-lane facility in accordance with updated standards of safety and design. A complete new intersection will be installed at the intersection of 9th Street North and River Drive, which will include a traffic signal. The new roadway will eliminate the existing sharp "S" curves and remove the existing bridge over the railroad.

This proposed project is one of several included in the transportation master plan for the area. Along 9th Street, it connects the future 10th Street Connector Bridge project (scheduled for construction in 1995) with the recently completed 9th Street Bridge Approach - South End project which was completed in 1991. It connects River Drive Road to the 15th Street and River Drive project on the east, which is scheduled to be constructed in 1994 (please see attached map).

A public scoping meeting will be held.

Public comment is important at this time to help identify issues that are of concern and alternatives that are feasible. The Montana Department of Transportation is seeking input from road users, property owners and other members of the public. Persons that may be interested in or affected by the proposed project are encouraged to attend.

Additional information can be obtained from or written comments can be sent to:

Doug Morgan
Consultant Design Engineer
Montana Department of Transportation
2701 Prospect Avenue
Helena, Montana 59620
Telephone: (406)444-6250

H:\River\Intent



NORTH

BHM S211 (2) 10TH STREET BRIDGE

O.F. 998 RIVER DR. RECONSTRUCTION
9TH ST TO 15TH ST NO.

EXISTING BRIDGE

FALLS CONSTRUCTION

RIVER DR

PROPOSED BRIDGE

ELYS PARK

MISSOURI RIVER

O.F. 979 10 ST.NO. BRIDGE APPROACH

CITY OF GREAT FALLS
BURKINSON RAILROAD

10 AVENUE NORTH

13TH STREET NO

14TH ST NO

15TH ST NO

9TH STREET NO

8TH AVE NO

SUMMARY
RIVER DRIVE - 9TH TO 15TH STREETS NORTH
PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING
GREAT FALLS, CASCADE COUNTY, MONTANA
JULY 21, 1993 at 7:00 P.M.

Bob Morrison of Morrison-Maierle/CSSA (MM/CSSA) introduced the project representatives and discussed the purpose and location of the proposed action to reconstruct approximately ½ mile of River Drive from 9th Street North to 15th Street North. He emphasized that this is a preliminary public scoping meeting to obtain comments and ideas from the public. The alternative routes shown on the displays were preliminary and only intended to help generate comments. Handouts and comment forms were given to everyone to help encourage input.

The next section presents a summary of comments from and discussion among various persons in attendance:

Mike Wagner of MM/CSSA discussed the history of the proposed action and other projects that will be constructed in the area of River Drive and the corridor generally bounded by 9th and 15th Streets North.

The Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) is proposing to build three projects to improve transportation in the vicinity of River Drive: 1) the proposed action to improve River Drive between 9th and 15th streets north; 2) the future 9th-10th Streets North (connector) Bridge; 2) the River Drive and 15th Street Intersection project on the east end. All three projects are scheduled for construction beginning in 1994.

It is expected that the construction of the future 10th Street Connector Bridge will take approximately two to three years, while this project will be completed in a single construction season. Therefore, a temporary facility connecting River Drive and the existing 10th Street North bridge will be necessary. It is recommended that the existing River Drive be used as the temporary facility, rather than constructing a new facility that will be removed when the future bridge is complete.

It is expected that construction of 9th Street North under this project will be terminated at the south shoulder of the existing River Drive Road. The future bridge project will construct the remaining portion of 9th Street that is located north of the existing River Drive.

The City of Great Falls has indicated that at this time, there are no plans to widen River Drive to four lanes west of 9th Street North. The City also indicated an interest in extending one of the streets between 9th and 15th streets, perhaps either 11th or 12th streets, northward to connect to River Drive. A study is currently underway by the city planning office to determine preferences of residents in the area for extending a street to meet River Drive.

The full four-lane typical with center median will be extended only as far west of 9th Street North as necessary to develop the proper length of auxiliary lanes (left-turn and possibly right-turn lanes) and then it will taper down to match the existing River Drive alignment in as short a distance as possible.

The existing pedestrian/bicycle path (River's Edge Trail) in the area will be redesigned and reconstructed for the entire length of this project. It is expected that an underpass will be built for the path to cross River Drive somewhere east of 9th Street North in order to separate bike traffic from roadway traffic.

The Great Falls Recreational Trails Committee will provide recommendations for the design requirements and location of the pedestrian/bicycle path.

Public Questions or Comments:

SCHEDULE AND CONSTRUCTION PERIOD

- Several members of the audience expressed concern about the time it will take to complete this project and the effects on access to businesses in the area. Doug Morgan of the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) responded that there will be some disruption, but it is standard policy for some form of access to be maintained to businesses throughout the period of construction. Everyone agreed access needs to be coordinated throughout construction.

PEDESTRIAN/BICYCLE PATH

- Doug Wicks pointed out that the current MDT plans for the new bridge show a 10' walkway on the upstream side, rather than two smaller walkways on each side as shown on the cross-section displayed at the meeting. Doug Morgan verified this. MDT will send a current version of the bridge typical to MM/CSSA.
- General questions about the pedestrian/bicycle path were asked regarding the schedule and possible conflicts with the large gas main crossing River Drive. Mike Wagner and Doug Morgan of MDT indicated the pedestrian/bicycle path will be built as a part of the proposed action, starting in 1994.

Mike Wagner noted the 24" natural gas line that feeds Great Falls Gas Company crosses far enough westward that it should not be necessary to disturb it with construction of the pedestrian/bike path.

- There was discussion of alternative routes for the pedestrian/bicycle path, including two possible locations for the pedestrian/bicycle path crossing in the vicinity of 9th Street North. One route of the path would be beneath the south end of the Future 10th Street North Connector Bridge. The other route would follow along an underpass south of the south end of the new bridge, just north of the future intersection of River Drive and 9th Street. Alternative routes also were identified along the part of the path that will reconnect with the railroad right of way from River Drive. The Great Falls Recreational Trails Committee (GFRTC), in cooperation with all affected land owners in the area, will review their preference for the location of the pedestrian/bicycle path. GFRTC will recommend a route and provide its recommended design standards to MM/CSSA.
- Dan Huestis of Falls Construction inquired about safety measures if the pedestrian/bicycle path crosses the roadway and traffic at grade. Mike Wagner indicated that an underpass is scheduled to be used somewhere west of 9th Street North to cross under River Drive and separate the pedestrian/bicycle path from traffic. To his understanding, the bike trail will cross 9th Street underneath the south end of the Future 10th Street Connector Bridge. Thus, the bike path will cross both River Drive and 9th Street within this projects' boundaries via a grade separation, thereby minimizing vehicular traffic verses biker/pedestrian conflicts.
- Lyle Meeks recommended minimizing at-grade crossings for pedestrians and bicyclists. He asked if a box culvert could be used under 9th Street North. Mike Wagner said some type of underpass with a box culvert or cast in place concrete structure was planned.
- Lyle also said there should be consideration of impacts to the pedestrian/bicycle path if the City extends 11th or 12th Streets North toward River Drive. The impact would be due primarily to more traffic and more crossings at streets and developed access. However, in this area, the bike path will follow along the abandoned Milwaukee Railroad berm, which is located north of River Drive. The streets will "Tee" intersect on the south side of River Drive, so there will not be conflicts between bikers/pedestrians and vehicular traffic if any of the streets between 9th and 15th are extended to intersect with River Drive.
- A member of the audience indicated fencing and other safety measures should be considered to provide separation between the roadway and the pedestrian/bicycle path. Project representatives agreed the design of the path would consider all appropriate safety measures.

- Lyle Meeks asked how the pedestrian and bicycle traffic would connect to the walkway on the Future 10th Street North Connector Bridge. Mike Wagner indicated the site is level enough to easily make the transition from the bridge to the pedestrian/bicycle path.
- Lyle also asked if the pedestrian/bicycle path would be paved in the project area. Mike replied that everything within the project area would be paved except the area right around the Future 10th Street Connector Bridge. In this area, the bikepath would be left unpaved until the bridge construction is completed. It is anticipated that that part of the bike trail would then be paved under the Future Bridge contract.

TRAFFIC PATTERNS

- Dan Huestis said the majority of traffic from the east on River Drive currently turns north onto 15th Street North. With the improvement, this probably will change, and the new bridge at 9th Street North will receive the majority of the traffic, including large trucks.
- Dan stated that squaring up River Drive with 9th Street North would be a better idea than the intersection alignment as shown on the preliminary drawing. Building the intersection with 90 degree angles will help truck traffic flow and turning conditions.

Mike Wagner explained the alignment shown on the preliminary drawing was intended to stimulate discussion and will be considered along with other alignments for the preferred alignment. Mike indicated the angle of the intersection should be as close as possible to 90 degrees.

- Dan also recommended keeping the intersection as far south of the Future 10th Street Connector Bridge as possible along 9th Street North. He said a longer distance would increase safety making possible wider curb cuts, which are especially convenient for large trucks. City ordinance allows 45 ft. for commercial curb cuts, and Dan thinks curb cuts should be about 50 feet at minimum.
- Owen Robinson of Lumber Yard Supply indicated longer curb cuts for big trucks to make the turns into the lumber yard was a concern.
- Del Henry of the Missouri River Diner also expressed concern about having adequate access with curb and gutter with elevations designed to match his property. Mike Wagner responded that the new curb and gutter should match up well with the east side of the diner's parking area, although there may be some cut on the west side of the property.
- Les Howard of Pepsi Cola Bottling, similar to other businesses in the area, expressed concern about maintaining access to the Pepsi Cola Bottling warehouse from River Drive. Les said big trucks use this approach, and it is very tight now. Mike Wagner indicated the options are limited in this area as to moving River Drive, and Pepsi might lose about 20 feet of their property. However, Mike also noted that the center turn lane should help the turning trucks by providing more room within the roadway.

GARY LEWIS, LEWIS CONSTRUCTION COMPANY

- Gary Lewis of Lewis Construction Company noted the importance of maintaining access adequate for large trucks turning into his property from River Drive. He prefers an approach on River Drive opposite Falls Construction. Gary also asked about possible access to the construction company's property if there is an extension of 11th or 12th Streets North. Gary will discuss this with the City as the study proceeds to consider the extension of streets in the River Drive corridor between 9th and 15th Streets North.
- Mike Wagner responded that the proposed action will generally be designed in compliance with city codes, although the design will consider waivers in appropriate circumstances. He explained that although the Montana Department of Transportation standards will take precedence over all others, there should be room to satisfy everyone and still comply with these standards.
- Dan asked if a traffic study has been done for the possible extension of one of the streets between 9th and 15th Streets North to River Drive. He indicated that through traffic would not use any north-south streets other than 9th or 15th Streets North because there isn't any destination at the ends of those streets.

Jim Rearden of the city/county planning office indicated the City will be doing a study and would not extend one of these streets if there was no interest or good reason to do it.

RIGHT-OF-WAY

- Owen Robinson with Lumber Yard Supply Company expressed concern that the lumber yard will lose land at the north edge of the property for new right-of-way along the new River Drive alignment. He also was concerned about keeping land available for use by the lumber yard on the south side of the property if there was to be an extension of 12th Street North to River Drive. He would not recommend an extension of 12th Street North.
- Lyle Meeks asked what will be done with the land remaining between the two rights-of-way (the old Burlington Northern Railroad and the new right-of-way) and whether the two rights-of-way would be contiguous? Mike Wagner replied that the right of way would probably be contiguous as MDT's policy is not to leave uneconomical, remaining parcels of land.

- Del Henry asked whether the land west of the Missouri River Diner extending to 9th Street North will become city park land. Jim Rearden of the city/county planning office indicated the study process will consider acquisition of that type of land throughout the project area to develop open space and park land.
- Les Howard asked whether there was any development planned in the area west of the intersection of River Drive and 15th Street North. No one in the audience indicated any knowledge of planned development in that area. Further discussion identified the old railroad right-of-way, which has become property of the City, as the only land in the area with adequate room for development. There was general agreement that there is no more room for development opposite River Drive (to the north) and away from the Pepsi Cola Bottling warehouse.

DESIGN FEATURES

- Dan Huestis recommended materials used in fills be considered carefully. (Refer to the section below on hazardous materials.) Dan also recommended that the design attempt to minimize cuts. Mike Wagner explained curb and gutter typical sections allow the design to have very few cuts or fills, as the section lends itself to matching the existing topography.
- Lyle Meeks inquired whether construction will take care of holes or hills outside the right-of-way, and he indicated levelling terrain and landscaping outside the two rights of way (old Burlington Northern and the new right of way) to clean up the area would be a benefit to the area. It was noted that this may be up to the City if MDT does not want to do work outside of right of way. Jim Rearden of the city/county planning office indicated much of the area is already much improved. It also was noted that this project may be able to use some of the extra dirt for fill material.
- Lyle also asked about installation of a new storm drain on 15th Street North. Jim Rearden said the City planned to put a large pipe (106") sleeve under 15th Street North to accommodate the future storm drain.
- The general audience indicated interest in the availability and use of enhancement funds for landscaping under the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA). Mike Wagner indicated that if the Montana Department of Transportation so chooses, landscaping will be considered in the design of the proposed action.

- Del Henry asked if the roadway would have lighting. Del and Dan Huestis expressed some desire for lighting provisions. Mike Wagner responded that the need for lighting will be considered in the design of the proposed action.

IMPROVEMENT OF THE AREA

- There was general agreement that the proposed action and the other two projects for improving the River Drive corridor will be "good" projects that improve the appearance and function of the area. A comment from the audience indicated a series of time-lapse photographs which would provide interesting documentation of improvements. There was no commitment from project representatives to provide such photography, beyond the normal documentation of progress in completing a project. Dan Huestis recommended that Doug Wicks be assigned this duty.
- Several landowners in the area east of 15th Street North expressed interest in the schedule and details of that project for improving the intersection of River Drive with 15th Street. Mike Wagner explained that that project has been approved as a categorical exclusion and will begin construction in 1994. (See more discussion above for schedule of the proposed action and two other projects in the River Drive corridor.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

- Dan Huestis mentioned the highway designers should be aware that the City's old ash dump underlies the entire project area and consists of large vertical fills of ashes.

UTILITIES

- Matt Quinn of Montana Power Company pointed out the location of the new intersection at 9th Street North and River Drive will be close to three existing power poles (100,000 volt overhead). That location was shown on the display board and is presented on the attached summary and map of the proposed action. Matt asked whether the alignment could be adjusted to avoid conflict with the power poles.

Mike Wagner indicated that the three poles will have to be moved in order for the future intersection to be constructed. Mike explained the power poles likely would need to be relocated in order to keep the intersection of River Drive and 9th Street North an adequate distance from the southern end of the new bridge. Desirable distance standards leave very little room to adjust the alignment at the intersection. Also, this three pole structure is less than 20 feet from the horizontal alignment of 9th Street North, upon which the Future 10th Street Connector Bridge alignment is based as well.

- Mike said the bridge design does not include a center median which could be used for a left-turn bay, meaning that the future intersection of 9th Street and River Drive will have to be located as far from the south end of the bridge as possible in order to develop a left-turn bay at the intersection. This is because auxiliary traffic (left-turn) lanes probably will be justified from a traffic flow standpoint for northbound traffic on 9th Street, as well as southbound coming off the future bridge. Movement of the intersection also would not alleviate the main problem with the power poles, which is their close proximity to the future centerline of 9th Street North, upon which the future bridge project has been designed.
- Dan Huestis said Falls Construction has a private water line (8" Asbestos Concrete - A.C.) that needs to be avoided in the project area. It travels along River Drive from about 6th Street North to the property of Falls Construction.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS

- There was general agreement that throughout the study, design and construction of the proposed action it is important to "let the landowners know what is going on, because they can be of great help." The audience also agreed it is important to distribute information to people on the project mailing list before the public hearing so they can be more prepared.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m..

- END OF MEETING -

ATTENDANCE
PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING NO. 1
RIVER DRIVE, 9TH TO 15TH STREETS NORTH, M 5205 (7)
GREAT FALLS, CASCADE COUNTY, MONTANA
21 JULY 1993

DOUG MORGAN	MT DEPT OF TRANSPORTATION	P.O. BOX 201001	2701 PROSPECT AVE	HELENA	MT	59620	444-6251
PAT GALVIN			105 29TH AVE, N W	GREAT FALLS	MT	59401	453-8464
DICK BORK			3200 17 AVE, S	GREAT FALLS	MT	59401	453-6591
GENE STETTLER			601 52ND ST, S	GREAT FALLS	MT	59401	453-6645
LES HOWARD	PEPSI		1212 15TH ST, N	GREAT FALLS	MT	59401	727-8112
JIM REARDEN	PUBLIC WORKS DEPT.	CITY OF GREAT FALLS	P.O. BOX 5021	GREAT FALLS	MT	59403	771-1258
KEN MESKE	GREAT FALLS TEACHERS	FEDERAL CREDIT UNION	P.O. BOX 2649	GREAT FALLS	MT	59403	727-7309
DOUG WICKS			P.O. BOX 553	GREAT FALLS	MT	59403	767-4966
MATT QUINN	MONTANA POWER CO.		P.O. BOX 589	GREAT FALLS	MT	59401	727-1231
JIM SUTICH			1021 15TH ST, N	GREAT FALLS	MT	59401	761-4420
G.A. LEWIS	LEWIS CONSTRUCTION		1025 11TH AVE, N	GREAT FALLS	MT	59401	454-1373
CRAIG NOWAK	MORRISON-MATERLE/CSSA		1321 8TH AVE, N, STE 104	GREAT FALLS	MT	59401	454-1513
BOB MORRISON	MORRISON-MATERLE/CSSA		1321 8TH AVE, N, STE 104	GREAT FALLS	MT	59401	454-1513
OWEN ROBINSON	LUMBER YARD SUPPLY		P.O. BOX 1419	GREAT FALLS	MT	59403	453-0356
DANA HUESTIS	FALLS CONSTRUCTION CO.		1001 RIVER DR., N	GREAT FALLS	MT	59401	727-5300
BILL WALTERS	CIVIC CENTER	CITY-COUNTY PLANNING	P.O. BOX 5021	GREAT FALLS	MT	59403	727-5881
BUCK COOPER	WESTERN PLAINS MACH.		2322 RIVER DR.	GREAT FALLS	MT	59401	453-1405
BRETT HERZOG	LEWIS CONSTRUCTION		P.O. BOX 2661	GREAT FALLS	MT	59401	454-1373
LYLE WEEKS			3505 8TH AVE, S	GREAT FALLS	MT	59405	727-6083
HENRY DELBERT			1000 RIVER DR., N	GREAT FALLS	MT	59401	761-9065
GEORGE O'DORE			1401 3RD ST, N W	GREAT FALLS	MT	59401	727-6222
TOMI ORRINO FLACK	MORRISON-MATERLE/CSSA		1321 8TH AVE, N, STE 104	GREAT FALLS	MT	59401	454-1513
ANDREW FINCH	CITY-COUNTY PLANNING BOARD	CIVIC CENTER	P.O. BOX 5021	GREAT FALLS	MT	59403	727-5881
CHARLES JENNINGS			317 FOX DR.	GREAT FALLS	MT	59404	452-3476
PHYLLIS HEMSTAD			106 6TH ST., N W	GREAT FALLS	MT	59404	452-7074

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RIVER DRIVE - 9TH TO 15TH

LOCATION AND DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING

October 20, 1994

A combined location and design public hearing was held on October 20, 1994, at 7:00 p.m. in Room 127 of the Montana State University, College of Technology (formerly Great Falls Vo-Tech), 2100 16th Avenue South, Great Falls, Montana.

The meeting was opened at 7:00 p.m. by the Montana Department of Transportation, District Engineer for Great Falls District, Mr. Eugene Stettler, who explained the purpose of this meeting, the work completed to date, a brief summary of the past Scoping Meetings and the handout that was available to all attendees. Eugene Stettler stated that comments regarding "saving the existing 10th Street North Bridge" were not appropriate for this meeting since it is outside the scope of work for this project, and would not be recorded. However, the public was given the opportunity to comment about the existing bridge. Discussion concerning the bridge lasted until 8:00 p.m.

After the public had voiced their concerns regarding the existing 10th Street Bridge, Mike Wagner of Morrison-Maierle/CSSA explained the design alternatives and the noted the key points of design identified in the environmental assessment.

Generally, all attendees of the public hearing were in favor of the preferred roadway design alternative outlined in the draft environmental assessment. There are some differences of opinion regarding the parameters of bike trail design, specifically the horizontal separation between the back of curb and the edge of bike trail.

Several people stated that the reason they were in attendance was related to "saving the old bridge" (the existing 10th Street North Bridge over the Missouri River). MDT stated at the beginning of the meeting that the purpose of this meeting was to discuss this project, River Drive - 9th to 15th, and that comments regarding the existing 10th Street North Bridge would not be recorded.

The public was informed that the final preferred alternative design would be determined at the culmination of the environmental documentation process.

The connection to the Presently Traveled Way (PTW) will contain 35:1 transitions for the edge of pavement. To be specific, the 20' of pavement widening on each side of centerline will take 700 lineal feet of roadway (measured along centerline) to accomplish ($35 \times 20' = 700'$). All full-width roadway sections (other than the transition in the connection to PTW) will receive Portland Cement Concrete Paving (PCCP) as the final riding surface. The final riding surface in the transition to PTW will be plant mix bituminous surfacing.

Through traffic and access to all business facilities located along the roadway will be maintained during construction. Special access conditions will be addressed during the right-of-way

negotiation process.

None of the landowners along the project have been contacted regarding right-of-way for this project as yet because no right-of-way negotiations can proceed until the alignment has been selected. The final alignment will not be selected until the environmental documentation process is complete. Landowners will be contacted by a representative of MDT upon completion of the right-of-way plans, which will follow completion of the environmental documentation process.

The ready date for this project is currently scheduled to be April of 1995. Many factors influence the designation of ready dates including, but not limited to, financing, public opposition, right-of-way acquisition problems, etc... The point of this is that ready dates are subject to change.

Dan Huestis of Falls Construction commented that the landscaping to be completed for the city of Great Falls is a good idea. He endorses Alternative B, the preferred alternative, and stated that this project will help the aesthetics of the area, which was formerly an ash dump grounds and landfill.

Lyle Meeks of the Bike Trail Committee, endorses Alternative B with the following additions:

- 1) 10' minimum horizontal separation between back of curb and bike trail, and
- 2) 12' wide bike trail instead of the 10' proposed, and
- 3) clean up the area, by landscaping, as mitigation for parkland take, and
- 4) the bike trail should adhere to AASHTO Bike Trail design criteria.

(As a note, the bike trail committee has requested a minimum of 10' horizontal separation between roadway and bike trail, AASHTO allows 5' without installing a barrier).

The question was asked "why change the bike path alignment from the current location, which is on abandoned railroad berm"? Mr. Huestis volunteered the response that the City (Great Falls) had already traded him 30,735 square feet of ground for 33,600 square feet of ground for the south approach to the future 9th - 10th Streets North (connector) Bridge project. The 30,735 square feet of ground going to Huestis contains part of the existing abandoned railroad berm which contains the bike trail at this time. Mr. Huestis does not want the bike trail crossing his property, therefore, the bike trail has to be relocated.

Regarding the land trade between the city of Great Falls and Mr. Huestis (Falls Construction), the question was asked if any parkland was involved in the trade. There is no parkland involved in the land trade between Mr. Huestis and the city of Great Falls.

Mr. McKay questioned why 11th Street North is to be extended to connect with the proposed River Drive alignment. MDT has directed the designer to accommodate an extension of 11th Street North by installing curb turns and paving out to the right-of-way limits only. The actual extension of 11th Street North will not be designed or constructed under this project. Mr. McKay was concerned about drainage along 11th Street North. It was recommended that he address his concerns to the City, since they regard areas located outside the scope of work of this project.

Mr. Mooney, city of Great Falls, stated that 11th Street North may never be extended.

The bike trail design on the north side of the Missouri River is not part of this project. The future 9th - 10th Streets North (connector) Bridge contains a 10' wide bike trail/pedestrian walkway located on the upstream (west) side. No sidewalks/bike trails are included for the downstream (east) side of the future bridge.

Dan Huestis recommended installing a jersey rail barrier between the bike path and the back of sidewalk or curb. It was pointed out that this would be located within the clear zone. It would seem to be a contradiction to place a concrete barrier nearly 3' high on the same project which is being financed by enhancement funds designated for beautification purposes.

It was pointed out that this project will not seriously affect any existing utilities except the 100,000 volt overhead power transmission line, which will have to be relocated.

It has been determined by MDT, in consultation with the Montana Department of Health and Environmental Sciences, that no storm water detention is necessary for this project.

Matt Quinn, of Montana Power Company (MPC), questioned the amount of excavation required over MPC's existing underground power lines supplying power to the 6th Street Pump Station, located just west of this project. It will not be a problem to relocate these, as long as the move is properly coordinated.

Truck traffic may become a problem once the future 9th - 10th Streets North (connector) Bridge is complete. MDT stated that this future bridge is located on a truck route.

An artists rendition was displayed to the public at the meeting.

The design of River Drive avoided an existing 24" natural gas transmission line which varies in depth below existing ground from just under 4' to over 8'. If the bike trail is redesigned, it may affect this 24" gas line, however, the current bike trail design avoids it. The bike trail contains a vertical hump to get over the 24" natural gas transmission line.

The maximum desirable profile grade of the bike trail, as recommended by AASHTO, is 5%. This will be attainable throughout this project without significant excavations or embankments.

This project is part of a transportation master plan for the area, which is described in detail in the environmental assessment (EA).

It is the intent of MDT to construct both this project and the 15th and River Drive Intersection project, which connects to the east end of this project, at the same time.

Additional comment sheets and copies of the EA were available to the public at the public hearing.

APPENDIX B - PUBLIC COMMENTS RECEIVED



Pepsi-Cola Bottling Co. of Great Falls

1212 15th St. North • P.O. Box 3229 • Phone (406) 727-8112 • Great Falls, Montana 59403-3229

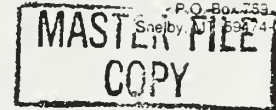
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NOV 28 1994

ENVIRONMENTAL BUREAU

HAVRE BRANCH
(406) 265-3610
7595 Hwy. 2 West
P. O. Box 2507
Havre, MT 59501-2507

SHELBY BRANCH
(406) 434-2513
401 11th Ave. North
P.O. Box 753
Shelby, MT 59604-0753



*cc: Eugene Stettin
Preconstruction*

November 25, 1994

Joel Marshik, Manager
Environmental Services
Montana Dept. of Transportation
P. O. Box 201001
Helena, Montana 59620-1001

SUBJECT: RIVER DRIVE PROJECT M 5205(7)
CW 2178

Please note the enclosed letter which expresses the concerns of the Pepsi-Cola Bottling Company in regard to the improvements to River Drive between 9th and 15th streets. We have received no further response other than word of the October hearing.

With plans by the Montana Department of Transportation to begin mid 1995, we are anxious to gain this needed information regarding our property.

Please respond at your earliest convenience.

Thomas R. Yerkes
General Manager
Pepsi-Cola Bottling Company
of Great Falls, MT.



Pepsi-Cola Bottling Co. of Great Falls

1212 15th St. North • P.O. Box 3229 • Phone (406) 727-8112 • Great Falls, Montana 59403-3229

HAVRE BRANCH
(406) 265-3610
7595 Hwy 2 West
P. O. Box 2507
Havre, MT 59501-2507

SHELBY BRANCH
(406) 434-2513
401 11th Ave. North
P.O. Box 789
Shelby, MT 59474-0789

November 8, 1993

Doug Morgan, Consultant Design Engineer
Montana Department of Transportation
Box 201001
Helena, Montana 59620-1001

Dear Mr. Morgan:

I wish to introduce myself: I am Tom Yerkes, General Manager of the Pepsi-Cola Bottling Company in Great Falls. Regretably, I was unavailable at the public scoping meetings held regarding the River Drive Project. Pepsi-Cola was represented at these meetings by Mr. Les Howard and Mrs. Melody Olson.

The thorough set of plans and considerations detailed in the October 20th letter by Mr. Dennis Unsworth are appreciated. Having discussed this situation, we would like to alert you to three issues.

First, I would like to reiterate the concerns voiced by Les Howard regarding the access of trucks in and out of both our building and property.

Second, in addition to the existing drives, one to the building and one to the back lot, we have a need to establish a third drive at the back of our property (closest to the 9th street bridge).

Finally, it is very important that we maintain proper drainage to the two current drives and likewise plan for the third access. The water run off from our property drains west and the provisions which currently exist help to alleviate this problem.

It is my intent to attend your next meeting. Any advanced notice of the date and time would be greatly appreciated as I schedule my appointments and travel.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Any communication with your office would be appreciated.

Sincerely,

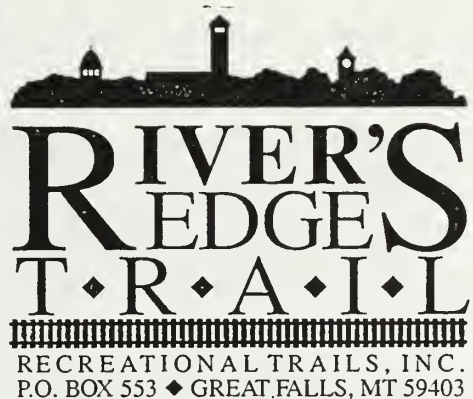
Thomas A. Yerkes
Manager
Pepsi-Cola Bottling Company
of Great Falls, MT.

November 9, 1994

MASTER FILE
COPY

Doug Wicks, VP
Recreational Trails, Inc (RTI)
PO Box 553
Great Falls, MT
59403-0553

Joel Marshik, Manager
Environmental Services
MT Dept. of Transportation (MDT)
PO Box 201001
Helena, MT
59620-1001



RECEIVED

NOV 10 1994

Re River Drive - Great Falls
M5205(7) Control No. 2178

ENVIRONMENTAL BUREAU

Dear Mr. Marshik,

Subject to the public hearing for the referenced project held on October 20, 1994, we offer the following comments.

First however, our officers and board want to express our thanks to MDT for making a great effort to provide much needed safety improvements for both motorized and non-motorized traffic in this area. This project together with the 9th-10th Street North (connector) Bridge may well be the most bicycle/pedestrian-friendly highway project in Montana history. We appreciate our opportunity to be involved in these projects. We hope that our comments, which deal primarily with safety issues, do not overshadow our overall strong support for this project. We look forward to working with MDT and other entities to refine details of the project so as to provide for maximum safety and accessibility for bicycles and pedestrians through this area well into the next century.

We respect the compromises and agreements that are now in place regarding ROW and are confident that it is still possible within these confines to provide safe bicycle/pedestrian facilities which essentially meet the goals of RTI with regard to River's Edge Trail which were incorporated into the project at an early stage of development.

As such, we feel we should comment regarding a swell of public interest for saving the 10th Street arch bridge. While that matter is not part of the hearings process of this project, there is some question as to how the old bridge might link with River's Edge Trail, particularly within the area of the referenced project.

We honor the negotiations that have led to the present general trail alignments and know of no provisions for bicycle/pedestrian access to the south end of the arch bridge. We are not supporting any public movement to include the arch bridge as part of River's Edge Trail for many reasons other than our satisfaction with the proposed trail realignments, connections and river crossing on the new bridge.

RTI is in no position to take ownership, operate, or maintain the 10th Street bridge and suggestions that the bridge should be part of the bike/pedestrian network are not coming from RTI. In fact, efforts to save the 10th street arch bridge in the name of River's Edge Trail poses some threat to our desire to restore and convert the historic 1913 Milwaukee bridge near Central Ave. West someday to a bike/pedestrian facility which the City owns the approaches to. (How many save-the-bridge drives can our community support? We guess one.) Also, leaving the arch bridge in place might threaten future north shore trail connections from the north end of the new bridge eastward under the new structure. We feel that in the future such a trail will be necessary to provide safe connections to Black Eagle if plans for development of a major waterslide park and the Black Eagle Recreation Area (Tailrace Island Park) become a reality.

RTI comments on M 5205 (7):

(1.) The proposed urban roadway section includes a 10 foot bikeway/walkway at the back of curb in several locations. AASHTO design guidelines state that "A wide separation between a bicycle path and adjacent highway is desirable to confirm to both the bicyclist and the motorist that the path functions as an independent highway for bicycles". We have advocated a minimum of 10' of separation since the earliest meetings on this project and feel that this was agreed to a number of times during the project development discussions. We are still strongly opposed to a separation of less than 10'. A 10-20 foot seeded "boulevard" section provides a recovery zone for wayward skaters, bicyclists and other path users as well as a place to plow snow in the winter that will not impact the path. Maintaining a minimum 10' separation greatly reduces sand and gravel deposits on the path from winter roadway sanding activities and reduces the brooming maintenance required to provide a safe path surface which is free from this and other debris generated by use of the roadway throughout the year.

2.) In all cases where the path is in close proximity to the roadway, the path should serve as the sidewalk. In other words, there is no need for a curb and 5' sidewalk, a small separation, and a 10' path along the north side of River Drive between 9th and about 13th Street. In this area where the path and roadway are parallel there should be a curb, a 10' seeded separation, a 10' path, and a minimum 3' shoulder area.

Where the path and roadway are not in close proximity (for example from 13th to 15th St) a curb and 5' sidewalk should be provided. This sidewalk would feed into the path. Ideally, the separation between the north edge of the path between 9th and 13th St and private property should be 10' rather than the minimum 3' which AASHTO recommends for graded shoulder. A greater separation would provide space for future vegetative visual screening.

(3.) We hope that adjustments of the alignment of the road within the ROW and avoiding duplication of sidewalk and path facilities will permit the 10' separation between traffic and closer to 10' than 3' of separation between path and private property. If it is possible to provide more buffer between the path and private property the project would be well served by the adjustment. In any case we advocate a minimum of 23' from edge of curb for the path which includes 10' separation from traffic, a 10' path and a 3' graded shoulder free from obstructions.

(4.) Use of a jersey rail barrier is only suggested when separation is 5' or less. We believe that jersey rail would create maintenance problems for both the road and path. The initial and long term maintenance costs of jersey rail are far greater than providing a safe 10' seeded separation along this generally straight section of road. Jersey rail would encourage drifting snow on both the road and path during the winter and present plowing problems for both as well. During the fall-spring low attitude of the sun, jersey rail will cast a shadow over some or all of a path immediately to its north. This will mean not only deep drifts due to prevailing winds but snow and ice will also escape the melting rays of the sun, and, while the rest of the path might be free of ice, these shaded areas might not. For extended periods. We very much prefer the aerodynamics of no jersey rail which will allow the wind to sweep most snows away and full sun to work on the ice. Snows that do pile up can be easily plowed onto the 10' separation. Depending on the placement of lighting above traffic lanes, jersey rail will also create shadows on up to 1/3 of a path immediately to its north, effectively narrowing the easily visible trail when the sun is low or down.

(5.) Regarding the two at-grade crossings of private roadways by the path we request that ramps for curb cuts at intersections should be the same width as the path (10') as suggested by AASHTO. A standard sidewalk curb cut is not wide enough and forces users towards the center. We think curb cuts should be parallel and directly in line with the path. In other words cuts would not be on the radius of the entrance curbing which would require path users to jog closer to the roadway to make these crossings.

(6.) The extension of 11th Street to intersect with River Drive may actually provide a safer access to River's Edge Trail from northside neighborhoods east of 9th Street than will the improved 9th Street itself,

considering the preference of AASHTO for the crossing of a bicycle path and a highway be at a location away from the influence of intersections with other highways (River Drive). In any case, we think that you should look at establishing curb cuts on both sides of the northeast private entrance curbing which is north of the intersection of 11th St. These cuts would be back from the radius of the entrance curbing and line up with bike/ped sidewalks or lanes which may be constructed with 11th St. Please consider the potential of bicycle and pedestrian use of 11th St to cross at this intersection to access River's Edge Trail.

(7.) There are several horizontal curves and elevation differentials in the proposed trail alignment that would tempt designers to vary from AASHTO and ADA geometric standards. The path curves at approaches to the new tunnel and bridge underpass need minimum 50' radii and 5% maximum grade. It appears that the radius of some of these curves will be much less. The negative effects of substandard curves can be partially offset by widening the pavement through the curves, according to the AASHTO. We recommend widening the pavement to 12' through curves with 50-95' radii, and widening to 14' through curves with less than 50' radii to provide a safety margin at these locations where line-of-sight is short. Additionally, we request installing a yellow center stripe on the path at the approaches to and through these curves and underpasses. Installing curve ahead warning signs in accordance with MUTCD would provide an additional margin of safety.

(8.) The easternmost transition from "curbside" path to the existing trail route (on the BNRR roadbed) should also meet AASHTO and ADA geometric standards. The curve at this transition should be widened and we believe that a longer transition from road grade path to railroad grade trail is needed. Meeting ADA grade requirements is critical to project success.

(9.) There is year-round spring activity south of the trail between 13th and 15th Street. We believe that recontouring the land to provide the transition ramp from railroad bed grade to new River Drive grade will channel additional runoff into the narrow culvert which is now full of water to within a foot of the gravel trail surface. We ask consideration of a drainage culvert under the trail and east of the transition ramp to avoid water flowing over the trail in this location.

(10.) We left a section of River's Edge Trail unpaved for several years in anticipation of this project. We advocate paving all of this unpaved gap in the trail from 7th St. to 17th St. under this project.

(11.) There is currently a dangerous situation developing under the 15th Street bridge. The area along the river near the storm water outfall has become a popular fishing spot and persons climbing up and down between the water and the trail are eroding the former railroad berm. This activity has eroded the north shoulder of the trail about 2' during the last 3

years. We believe that a safety railing should be placed along this dropoff to avoid someone falling off from above and prevent further erosion at this site which will eventually claim the north trail shoulder and possibly threaten the trail surface itself. We believe that a 4.5' high railing similar to that required at the 9th-10th connector bridge underpass be designed and installed at this location as part of the project.

(12.) The City parkland being taken for new roadway has been heavily re-graded for railroads and roadways. We strongly advocate comprehensive regrading and seeding of the entire area between 7th and 11th Street, to make the new Great Falls north entrance more pleasing and to mitigate loss of parkland.

(13.) The new roadway design should coordinate with the City Parks and Recreation Department for curb cuts (laydown curb/sidewalk sections) for future vehicle parking area entrance to the City owned parklands west of 9th Street between BNRR and the realigned River Drive. Such parking area would allow access to these parklands and provide mitigation for the existing gravel trailhead parking area at 9th Street which will be eliminated by the project. RTI would be most happy to work with MDT and the City in locating future driveways and laying curb down accordingly.

(14.) We appreciate MDT plans to light the tunnel under River Drive.

(15.) We appreciate MDT plans to connect the path to extended 9th St. sidewalks and to the bike/pedestrian walkway on the new bridge.

The River's Edge Trail is a very high visibility project in Great Falls. Trail user volumes are much higher than anticipated and are estimated to exceed 100,000 user visits per year. There is keen public support and media interest. Honestly, the trail is on a fairly short list of things our community can "crow" about. With this level of usage and interest we all need to make sure that new segments of the trail are well designed, fully accessible, and safe for users of all ages. Please assure that adequate coordination is accomplished at the local level.

Thanks for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,


 Doug Wicks, VP, RTI

cc Gene Stetler, MDT
 John Lawton, GF City Manager
 Ben Rangel, GF CCPB
 Jerry Sepich, Parks & Rec. Dept.
 RTI Board of Directors

GREAT FALLS RIVER DRIVE PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING NUMBER 1, 21 JULY 1993 4 193

M 5205(7), ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (EA) FOR PROPOSED IMPROVEMENT TO
RIVER DRIVE BETWEEN 9TH STREET NORTH AND 15TH STREET NORTH IN GREAT
FALLS, CASCADE COUNTY, MONTANA - FEDERAL AID URBAN ROUTE (FAU) 5205

This page is available for members of the public to make written comments.

The Montana Department of Transportation is seeking comment from road users, property owners and other members of the public. Please write your comments or suggestions below concerning the proposed project. Comments may be given to project representatives at the meeting or mailed to:

MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
CONSULTANT DESIGN
ATTN: ROBERT D. MORGAN
2701 PROSPECT AVENUE
PO BOX 201001
HELENA, MT 59620-1001

TELEPHONE: (406) 444-6251

Additional information can be obtained from or written comment can be sent to the address listed above.

Commenter name:

LYLE J. MEEKS

Affiliation:

GREAT FALLS RECREATIONAL TRAILS, INC. BOARD MEMBER

Address:

3505 8TH AVE - So.

City/state/zip:

GREAT FALLS, MT. 59405

Comments:

1. EXTENSION OF A STREET NORTHERLY (11TH, 12TH
TO INTERSECT W/ RIVER DRIVE SEEMS TOO DIFFICULT.

WHY NOT CONSIDER IMPROVING ACCESS FROM ADJACENT
COMMERCIAL / INDUSTRIAL AREAS VIA 10TH AVE. NORTH TO 9TH
STREET AND TO 14TH STREET? THERE DOES NOT SEEM TO BE A LOW IMPACT
ROUTE FROM SOUTH TO NORTH. OVER →

(Use reverse side for additional comments)

2. A BIKE PATH ROUTE WHICH HAS GRADE SEPARATION @ 9TH STREET AND @ 15TH STREET AND MINIMIZES AT-GRADE DRIVEWAY CROSSINGS BETWEEN THE TWO STREETS IS MOST DESIRABLE. "STOCK PASS" LIGHTED UNDERPASSES WITH "VANDAL-RESISTANT" URETHANE COATING (perhaps over an epoxy polyamide undercoat) WOULD BE OF GREAT BENEFIT TO LOCAL TAXPAYERS. THE PATH SHOULD STAY AS CLOSE TO THE HIGH BANK OF THE RIVER AS POSSIBLE, ON THE NORTH SIDE OF RIVER DRIVE. *

3. THE NEW INTERSECTION OF 9TH ST. & RIVER DRIVE WILL OCCUPY A CURRENTLY UNDEVELOPED CITY PARK. TO MITIGATE IMPACTS OF THIS TAKING, I REQUEST THAT THE REMAINING CITY PARK LAND AND ABANDONED RAILROAD CUT / FILL SECTIONS BE ROUGH GRADED, FINE GRADED, TOPSOILED, AND SEEDED, WITH DUE RESPECT FOR THE TRAIL LOCATION! EAST-BOUND OFF THE OLD CMSPP BERM.

*4. A PRELIMINARY ALIGNMENT HAS BEEN AGREED UPON BY GFRTI, THE CITY OF GREAT FALLS, AND MDT (JASON GVAZO, ENG. SERVICES SPUR., IN 1991.

TRAIL
5. PLEASE COORDINATE ✓ ROUTING FROM NEW 10TH ST. BRIDGE TO EAST/WEST TRAIL ROUTE PARALLELING THE RIVER. REMEMBER ADA DESIGN STDS. FOR MAX. LONGITUDINAL GRADE.

6. THIS IS A MUCH NEEDED PROJECT!

GREAT FALLS RIVER DRIVE PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING NUMBER 1, 21 JULY 1993

M 5205(7), ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (EA) FOR PROPOSED IMPROVEMENT TO RIVER DRIVE BETWEEN 9TH STREET NORTH AND 15TH STREET NORTH IN GREAT FALLS, CASCADE COUNTY, MONTANA – FEDERAL AID URBAN ROUTE (FAU) 5205

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PO BOX 201001
HELENA, MT 59620-1001

TELEPHONE: (406) 444-6251

Additional information can be obtained from or written comment can be sent to the address listed above.

Commenter name:

Charles D. Jennings

Affiliation:

Chairman, Recreation Trails Committee Inc, (River Edge Tr

Address:

317 Fox Dr

City/state/zip:

Great Falls, MT 59404

Comments:

My primary concern is for the safety of River Edge Trail users. The most important feature is to have an alignment which avoids at-grade crossing of 9th St. and of River Drive. I prefer the alignment passing under River Dr. west of 9th St. and under the 9th St. bridge. I don't like crossing driveways of The Diner

(Use reverse side for additional comments)

Comments (Cont'd)

and Fall Construction, but this is still preferable to other alignments such as south of River Dr. if there is good visibility of the driveways and they are well signed.

GREAT FALLS RIVER DRIVE PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING NUMBER 1, 21 JULY 1993

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HELENA, MT 59620-1001

TELEPHONE: (406) 444-6251

Additional information can be obtained from or written comment can be sent to the address listed above.

Commenter name: DELBERT A. HENRY

Affiliation: OWNER MISSOURI RIVER DINER/SALOON

Address: 1000 RIVER DRIVE NORTH

City/state/zip: GREAT FALLS, MT. 59401

Comments: 1. IF THE ENTRANCE/EXIT FOR FALLS CONSTRUCTION AND THE MISSOURI
RIVER DINER ARE THE SAME, REQUEST THE LOCATION BE AS CLOSE TO ^{THE} DINER
AS POSSIBLE DUE TO CONSTANT TRAFFIC. I ALSO REQUEST THE TURN OUT IS
4-LANE TO LESSON TRAFFIC CONGESTION.

2. REFER #7 ATTCH LTR.

26 MARCH 1993

Morrison Maierle/CSSA
P.O. Box 6147
Helena, Mt., 59601

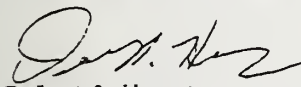
Subject: Southern 9th Street Connector Bridge Approachway

Dear Sir:

My wife and I are the owners of the Missouri River Diner which is located at the intersection of the 10th street bridge and River Road. It is our understanding your company has the contract of designing and engineering the southern approachway to the new bridge. We have some concern and would appreciate any information you can forward to us on the following:

1. The new River Road from 14th street to 9th street will be located south of our establishment instead of north as it is now. Our question is what will be the road height, compared to the height of our business building? Our concern is whether traffic will be obligated to drive uphill, downhill or level into our parking lot.
2. Will there be Two openings in the curbing so as to allow easy access and departure?
3. Will the roadway be lighted at or near the business?
4. Could you give us the distance in feet and inches from our business building to the new Right-Of-Way?
5. What are the plans for re-locating power lines? Is there the possibility of putting power lines underground in order to keep the area more open and clear of obstructions.
6. Will 11th street extend to the new roadway?
7. What are, if any, plans for the area of land between the present "S" curve and the new 9th street road between the new intersection and bridge? This area of land could be made into a park. Such a park would entail landscaping and the installation of a sprinkler system. Another idea would be to take one of the present bridge's support arches and place it as a monument dedicated to past designs and also something future generations can look upon. The entrance or approachway could be from the River Trail. Later a drinking fountain, seats or picnic tables, lighting and trash retainers could be installed

This area of the city many years ago was once the city dump. In the following years it is still an eye-sore, especially for visitors to the city. Here is an excellent opportunity/time to enhance one of the cities entry-ways. My wife and I support the Rivers Trail and making Great Falls look green and beautiful. Thank You.



Delbert A. Henry
Missour River Diner
1000 River Drive North
Great Falls, Mt., 59401

Heide Stettler
H Falls

commsend.frm

GREAT FALLS RIVER DRIVE PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING NUMBER 1, 21 JULY 1993

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HELENA, MT 59620-1001

TELEPHONE: (406) 444-6251

Additional information can be obtained from or written comment can be sent to the address listed above.

Commenter name:

Rep. Patrick S. Galvin HD 40

Affiliation:

Montana House of Representatives

Address:

105 - 29th Ave. N.W.

City/state/zip:

Great Falls, Mt. 59404

Comments:

I believe the renovation and moving - straightening of River Drive is a very forward and necessary move. The comments made by the property owners along the prospective route should be heard and given every consideration. I would like to

(Use reverse side for additional comments)

Comments (Cont'd)

Comment on the possibility of extending twelfth street north to River Drive. I see some very positive safety and access issues with this idea. It would allow a now unsustainable route to ninth and tenth avenues north and to Lumber Yard Supply, also the intersection onto River Drive would allow access into Halls Construction as well. It would allow both of the above mentioned businesses a street width into their properties as compared to a city curb cut. It would also be a 90° corner. Thank you for your time and consideration. I appreciate far sighted movements.

GREAT FALLS RIVER DRIVE PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING NUMBER 1, 21 JULY 1993

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PO BOX 201001
HELENA, MT 59620-1001

TELEPHONE: (406) 444-6251

Additional information can be obtained from or written comment can be sent to the address listed above.

Commenter name: G. A. Lewis, Brett Herzog

Affiliation: LEWIS CONSTRUCTION COMPANY

Address: 1025 - 11th Avenue North

City/state/zip: Great Falls MT 59401

Comments: See Attached

Comments:

Lewis Construction Company will oppose the above improvement unless the following improvement is added into the design:

Access from our property, either on 11th or 12th Streets, for use of our construction vehicles. All other routes out of our yard have been closed off, forcing our heavy vehicles to travel down poorly maintained 10th Avenue North winding around to gain access to the highways. This causes dust, neighborhood complaints, and extra maintenance on City streets as well as on our vehicles.

Other design options that we would like considered if an access is given, in addition to the options you have listed, are the following:

(1) Lighting of the roadway with a design conducive to the upper river road lighting for motorist safety and pedestrian path safety at night.

(2) A grade separation on 9th Street for the pedestrian path in the form of two box culverts with tunnel lighting controlled by an electric eye to provide safe day crossing and night safety, possibly limiting unwanted incidents.

(3) Grass and landscaping with trees indigenous to the area, but not the same as the lower and upper trails, perhaps aspen, mountain ash, and arborvitae that are all native to this climate and something to give the area a distinctive look. Several large rocks - 10 C.Y. size - followed by smaller 1 C.Y. rocks, removed from the 10th Street overpass to give the trail some character. Benches, tables, wood signs along the trail with mileage markers and messages similar to the ones on the lower trail.

(4) Automatic drip watering system for trees, etc.

(5) Proper ingress and egress for the four surrounding landowners: Lumberyard Supply, Missouri River Diner, Falls Construction, and Lewis Construction Company.

The Landowners plan to hold a meeting in 30 days with the City of Great Falls and, if these proposals and adequate compensation are negotiated, Lewis Construction Company may drop their opposition to this proposal and negotiate land sales it owns in the future roadway path.

LEWIS CONSTRUCTION COMPANY

CC

1025 ELEVENTH AVENUE NORTH • BOX 2669 • GREAT FALLS, MONTANA 59403
(406) 454-1373 FAX (406) 761-1116

RECEIVED

JUL 26 1993

DATE: July 22, 1993

MORRISON—MAIERLE/CSSA.

TO: Surrounding Landowners, Trail Path Users (Partial)

cc: Brett Herzog
Matt Robinson
File: Re-open 9/8/93

FROM: Gary Lewis, Lewis Construction Company

RE: M52095(7) River Drive 9th to 15th

Enclosed is a copy of our comments to the Montana Department of Transportation. The City of Great Falls has tentatively set a meeting for surrounding landowners in approximately 30 days to discuss this access and compensation and/or land swap. Once we work out these details, which is Lewis Construction Company's principal concern, we will contact the people that we recognized at the meeting. If you are interested in doing this, please contact me. As suggested by Chuck Jennings, perhaps we can all sit down prior to this October 30th hearing and iron out our different views; possibly meeting after Labor Day, so we hopefully can support each other and make this route aesthetically pleasing as well as functionally correct, as it will be there for a long time.

I noticed that some trail people had thoughts of going with the trail under the bridge. In our view (only sometimes correct) bird droppings, vagrant encounters, and personal safety make this a possible hazardous route. We're leaving the actual road alignment and grade on 9th Street in Dan Huestis' capable hands, and as he previously pointed out, this will have extremely heavy usage and should have a good wide turning base, as more vehicles, gravel, ready mix, dump and lumber trucks, etc. are going to make heavy use of this route.

cc: Mike Wagner ✓

Comments:

Lewis Construction Company will oppose the above improvement unless the following improvement is added into the design:

Access from our property, either on 11th or 12th Streets, for use of our construction vehicles. All other routes out of our yard have been closed off, forcing our heavy vehicles to travel down poorly maintained 10th Avenue North winding around to gain access to the highways. This causes dust, neighborhood complaints, and extra maintenance on City streets as well as on our vehicles.

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APPENDIX C - AGENCY COMMENTS RECEIVED

Montana Department of Transportation
Helena, Montana 59620-1001

Rec'd 4-13-95

Memorandum

To: Karl Helvik, ~~Supervisor~~
Environmental Engineering Section

From: Timothy A. Olson, CE Spec. III *(Tim O.)*
Hazardous Waste Section

Date: February 27, 1995

Subject: Great Falls - River Drive
M 5205(7)
Control No. 2178

This project has known solid waste concerns within it's construction limits. Two locations exist, however, they do not require action at this point. Cascade County Health has been involved in our process.

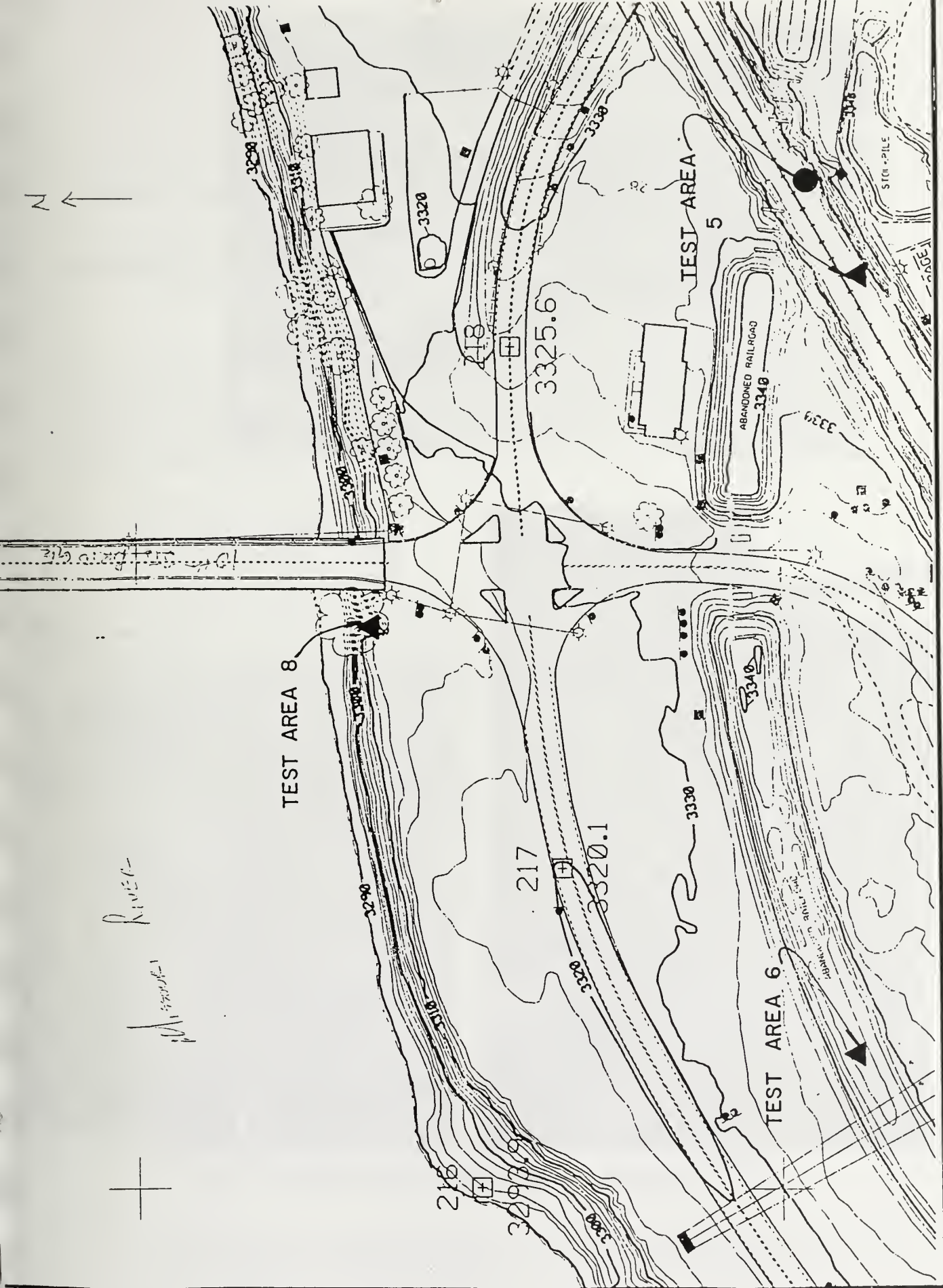
The first site is located between stations 20+00 and 25+00. This is the location of an old landfill site and is noted as Test Area 6 on the attached map. The city of Great Falls was reconstructing a portion of 9th St. when they encountered solid waste at this location. Most of the material they encountered was used as fill in their project. Tires and construction debris were hauled off to the local landfill. A special provision will not be written for this item because this location is primarily a fill area for MDT and minor disturbance is anticipated.

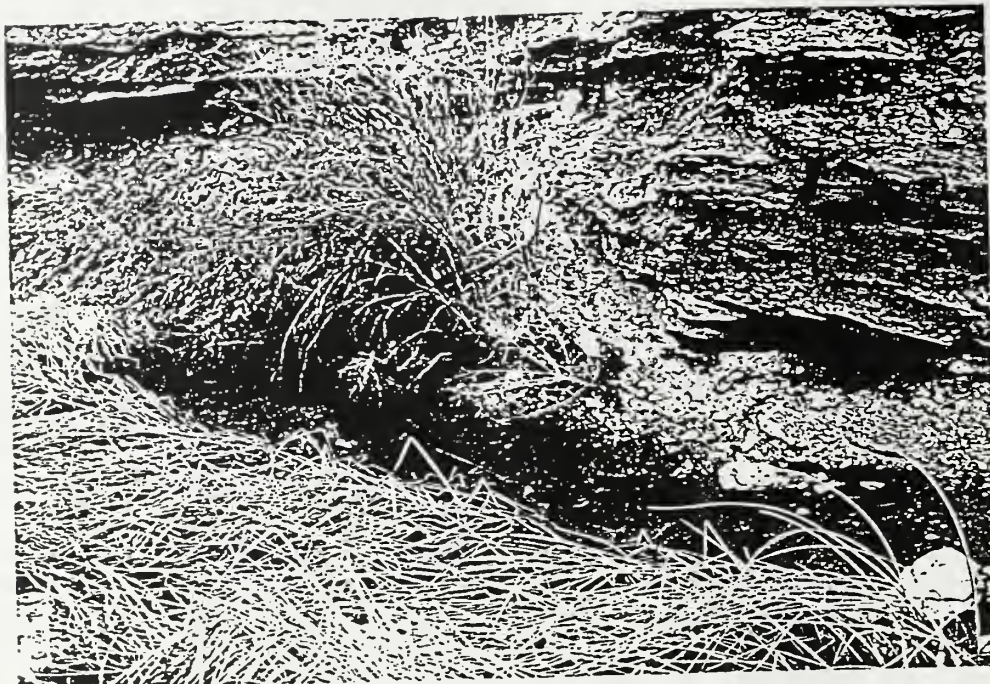
The second site is located at station 31+00 near the south railroad bridge abutment and is noted as Test Area 5 on the attached map. Water was sampled for Fecal Coliform Bacteria from a nearby slope, and results came up positive. This water is believe to be coming form Lewis Construction's adjoining lot. After discussing the problem with Cascade County Health, they have required Lewis Construction to hook up to city sewer. This is being done. Cascade County believes that by the time MDT starts constructing the roadway, the health risk will be minimal, if at all. A special provision will not be written for this item because of Cascade County's comments and the fact that MDT's disturbance to this area will be minor. Refer to the second page of the attachments for photos of the area.

These were the only sites identified that posed a concern for highway construction. Please note them in your environmental document as locations that are fully understood and characterized.

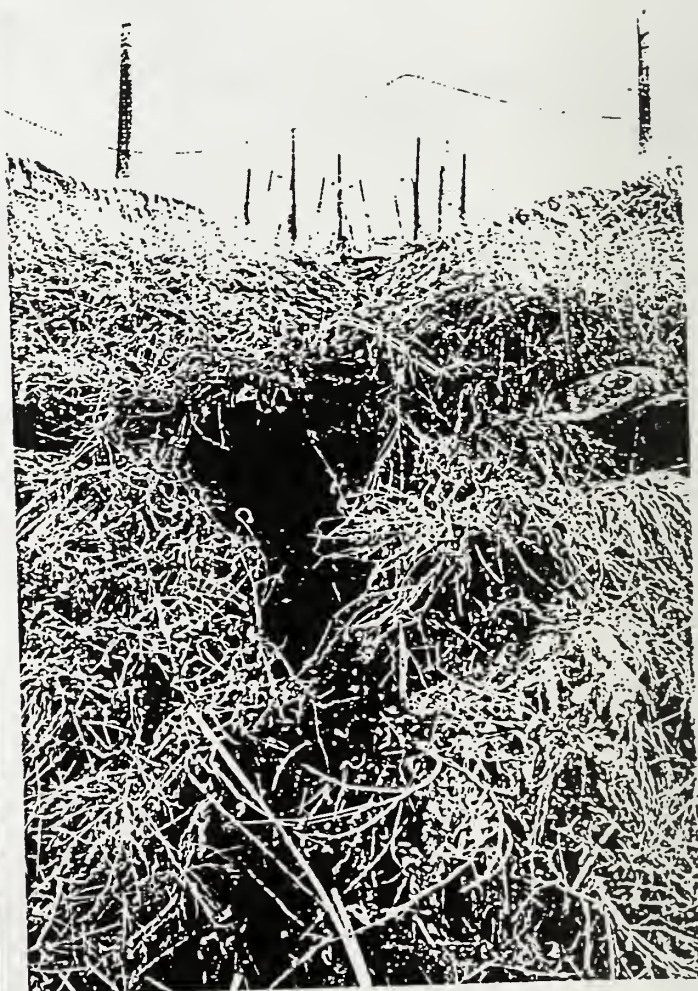
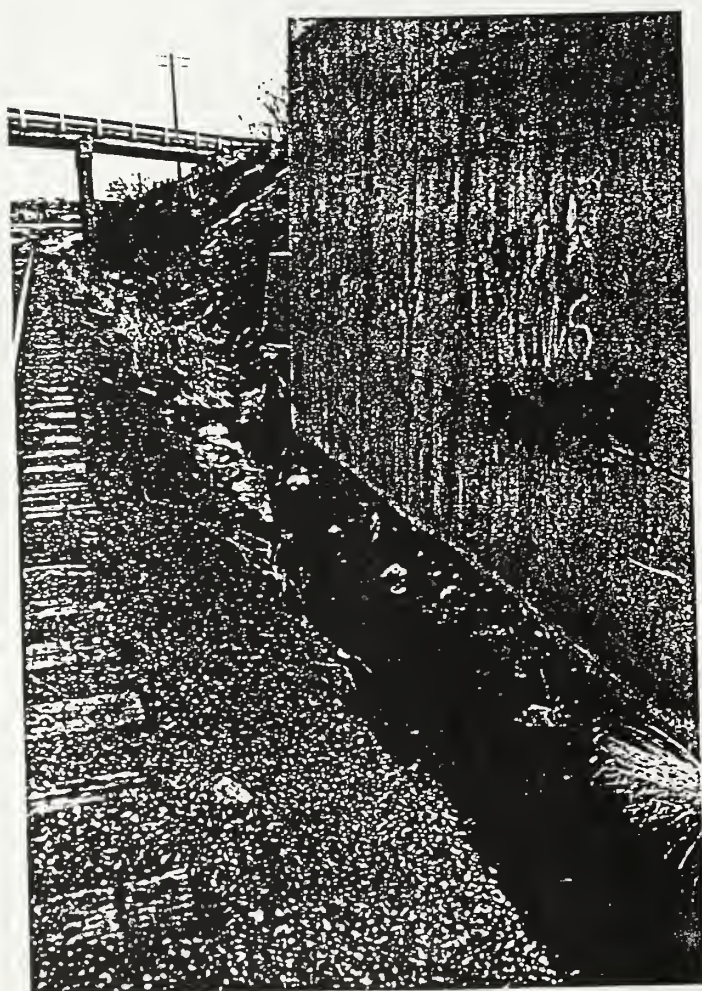
Attachments:

cc: Bob Tholt - Helena
Bob Fischer - Helena
Carolyn Rogers - Helena
Sam Naseem - Helena
Mike Langenfus- Helena
Doug Gregory - Great Falls
Darrel Furan - Cascade Co. Health
Environmental File ✓





Test Area 5
Soil Sample
Site



Test Area 5 - Water Sample Site and Seep

GREAT FALLS CITY-COUNTY PLANNING BOARD
SERVING THE COUNTY OF CASCADE AND CITY OF GREAT FALLS, MONTANA

November 17, 1993

RECEIVED

NOV 18 1993

MORRISON-MATTHEWS, INC.

Mr. Doug Morgan, P. E.
Consultant Design Engineer
Consultant Design Section
Montana Department of Transportation
Helena, Montana 59620

Re: River Drive - 9th to 15th
Project No. M5205(7)
Control No. 2178

Dear Mr. Morgan:

Thank you for the opportunity to review and provide comments on the preliminary Environmental Assessment, dated November 2, 1993, for this project.

The following comments and observations are provided for consideration.

- ♦ Page 1-1, Second Paragraph, Item 4. It is requested that the last sentence regarding the design, funding and construction of 11th Street by the City be deleted and instead insert "The design, funding and construction of this street is not included in the scope of the proposed project."

Although 11th Street will be a local responsibility, it shouldn't be misinterpreted that local government (City of Great Falls) will be solely responsible for its design, funding and construction.

- ♦ Page 1-1, Second Paragraph, Item 5. It is requested that "along River Drive" be deleted and instead insert "generally along an east-west alignment."
- ♦ Page 2-1, Third Paragraph. Perhaps the project area accident rate should be noted as being "almost" three times the statewide average, rather than "over."
- ♦ Page 2-1, Last Paragraph. Should reference also be made to the narrow pavement and bridge widths which contribute to driver discomfort and safety?

- ◆ Page 3-2, Figure 3-1. It is requested that the bike path alignment east of 11th Street (extended) immediately access the former BN Railroad right of way (City owned), instead of continuing adjacent to River Drive and then accesses the railroad right of way farther east.
- ◆ Page 3-5, Second Paragraph, First Item. It is our understanding that a ten-foot wide concrete sidewalk will only be provided on the west side (upstream side) of the new bridge. Therefore, a ten-foot wide sidewalk may not be needed on the east side of 9th Street. This item implies that ten-foot sidewalks will be provided on both sides of the new bridge. Therefore, the bike trail on the east side of 9th Street need not be constructed immediately adjacent to the roadway in this area.
- ◆ Page 3-5, Fourth Paragraph, Third Item. It is requested that the word "generally" be added, to read, "A bicycle path generally parallel with River Drive."
- ◆ Page 3-5, Last Paragraph, Third Item. "The" should be "They"?
- ◆ Page 4-1, First Paragraph, Third Item. Add "generally," as noted above, for consistency.
- ◆ Page 4-1, Fifth Paragraph. Perhaps the reasons for underdevelopment in the area can be expanded to include "limited access and limited developable land due to several former railroad corridors through the area." Perhaps the last sentence in this paragraph could also be revised, to read, "..., the rate and type of development in the area may change."
- ◆ Page 4-4, First Paragraph. Is "Pepsi Cola Bottling Company" located adjacent to the proposed project or is it in fact located adjacent to the proposed River Drive/15th Street Intersection Reconstruction Project (Project F10-1(9)3)?
- ◆ Page 4-5, Seventh Paragraph. The "Rivers Edge Rails to Trails group" should more appropriately be referenced as, "Recreational Trails, Inc. (Citizen Volunteers)."
- ◆ Page 4-6, First and Fourth Paragraphs. There is concern that perhaps too much emphasis is being placed on security issues relative to the proposed underpasses. Although there is a need to identify and remain aware of these potential issues, we would hope these concerns would not preclude or jeopardize the provision of underpass facilities. It is felt that separated grades provide more benefits to trail users in the form of safer travel conditions and reduced traffic conflicts, than any potential security problems created.

- ♦ Page 4-6, Sixth Paragraph. Reference should perhaps be made that the Great Falls/Cascade County non-attainment area is classified as a "not classified" non-attainment area. This is the least severe of the four levels of non-attainment classifications and means the area has not violated Federal CO standards since at least 1988 and is not subject to the SIP submittal requirements of the CAAA of 1990. Additionally, the City of Great Falls/Cascade County and the Montana State Air Quality Bureau jointly completed an emissions inventory in December, 1989, to satisfy the Phase I requirements of EPA's post-1987 ozone/CO policy. The Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 were not in place at that time. Should mention also be made that the Great Falls/Cascade County area is not in violation of any other Federal Ambient Air Quality Standards?
- ♦ Page 4-6, Last Paragraph. Instead of the 1992-1996 TIP, perhaps reference should be made to the 1993-1997 TIP. The proposed project is also included in this latter TIP. It may further strengthen the statement that "Both documents conform to the current SIP" and meet the requirements of the CAAA of 1990, if reference is specifically made that this statement is based on formal conformity determinations made by the Great Falls City-County Planning Board (Metropolitan Planning Organization). Additionally, these conformity determinations were jointly approved by EPA and FHWA. As such, these conformity determinations are the basis to be able to state that the proposed action complies with the current SIP, not the fact that the TIP was approved by FHWA or that it states the action has no adverse impacts.
- ♦ Page 4-7, Fourth Paragraph. Is the statement in the first sentence of this paragraph accurate, regarding the "proposed action is located in an "unclassifiable"/attainment area of Montana "in view of its proximity to the Great Falls/Cascade County non-attainment area?"
- ♦ Page 4-9, Item 2. Jackrabbit Lane?
- ♦ Page 4-9, First full paragraph. As a noise mitigation measure, could it be stated that every effort will be made to keep the proposed bike/pedestrian trail beyond the 75 foot distance from street centerline in an effort to reduce trail user exposure to the higher sound levels (67 dBA).
- ♦ Page 4-10, Third Paragraph. The last sentence should start with "They" not "The"?
- ♦ Page 4-14, Third Paragraph. Is it Great Northern "Railway," or "Railroad"?
- ♦ Page 4-14, Seventh Paragraph. The park should be referenced as, "Elks Riverside Park." Is the figure, "4-2" or "4-1"? The last sentence in this paragraph may be misleading. Although there aren't any existing plans for immediate or near future park development in this area, it may not be appropriate to state that there are "no plans for future development." As a result of the improvements from the proposed

Mr. Doug Morgan
Montana Department of Transportation
Page 4
November 17, 1993

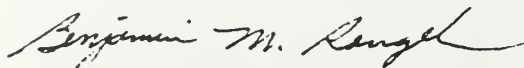
project, interest has been focused toward this park area for landscaping, beautification, etc., to visually improve the area.

- ♦ Page 4-16, Fifth and Sixth Paragraphs. It is not clear in these two paragraphs whether any additional mitigation measures are needed to address potential impacts of the River Drive (9th-15th Sts.) Project or whether the River Drive project impacts will be addressed with the measures proposed in the Section 4(f) evaluation for the bridge project. There are some who feel additional mitigation measures are needed under the River Drive project. Therefore, this section needs to be more specific on what additional measures will be provided.
- ♦ Page 4-17, Fourth Paragraph, First Item. As a visual mitigation measure, it is stated that "tress, shrubs and landscaping may be provided." In order for the measure to be relevant and enforceable, a term stronger than "may" would be appropriate. This measure is strongly encouraged. Additionally, it would be beneficial to state whether this measure will be applicable to all publicly owned property in the area of the project or is specifically limited to roadway right of way for the project.
- ♦ Page 4-18, First Paragraph. Mention is made to the "poor level-of-service of the existing interchange." Would reference to the existing "roadway" or "intersection" be more appropriate?
- ♦ Page 4-18, End of Page. Is a concluding statement needed that "no adverse impacts have been identified"?

In general, the document appears to be well written and understandable. Additionally, the intent of our comments are to clarify any questions and issues early in this process in an effort to help expedite the preparation, review and approval of a final environmental assessment report.

If you have any questions, please contact me.

Sincerely,



Benjamin M. Rangel
Senior Planner

BMR:jp

cc: Jim Rearden, City Engineer
John Mooney, Planning Director
Gene Stettler, MDT-Great Falls
Mike Wagner, M/M

NOV 15 1994

ENVIRONMENTAL BUREAU

GREAT FALLS CITY-COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

SERVING THE COUNTY OF CASCADE AND CITY OF GREAT FALLS, MONTANA

November 10, 1994



Mr. Joel Marshik, Manager
Environmental Services
Montana Department of Transportation
P. O. Box 201001
Helena, Montana 59620-1001

Re: River Drive (9th-15th)
M 5205 (7)
Control No. 2178

Dear Mr. Marshik:

The following comments are provided for consideration during preparation of final plans for the referenced project, as related to proposed bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

These represent the consensus of the Trails Working Group which discussed the project and trail features during a meeting on November 1, 1994.

- The Trails Working Group strongly recommends the provision of at least a 10 foot buffer strip or separation between the edge of the bicycle/pedestrian trail and the back of curb for the realigned River Drive. It is of particular interest that the separation be provided from about Station 31+00, eastward to where the trail then transcends back onto the abandoned railroad right of way (Station 39+00). This segment is illustrated on the attached Exhibit 1. Regarding the alignment of the trail for other segments of the project, those were previously provided to MDT and Morrison-Maierle in a letter dated, October 25, 1993. We trust those alignments will be maintained in the final design.
- For those segments of the roadway project where the proposed trail will closely parallel (10 foot separation) the new River Drive, the Trails Working Group further recommends that no separate and parallel sidewalk be provided. It is felt the trail would serve the same purpose and function and that the strip not used for the sidewalk could be better used for the buffer strip requested in the previous comment.

This letter presents the official position of the Trails Working Group which was appointed by the City Manager in June, 1990, and directed with the responsibility for trail development (River's Edge Trail) in the City of Great Falls. This group includes representatives from the

Mr. Joel Marshik
Page two
November 10, 1994

City of Great Falls; Montana Department of Transportation; Great Falls City-County Planning Board; Cascade County Planning Board; Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks; and Recreational Trails, Inc. (Citizen Volunteers).

If you have any questions regarding these comments or any other trail related issues, please contact me at 771-1180, Extension 333.

Sincerely,



Benjamin M. Rangel
Senior Planner

BMR:jp

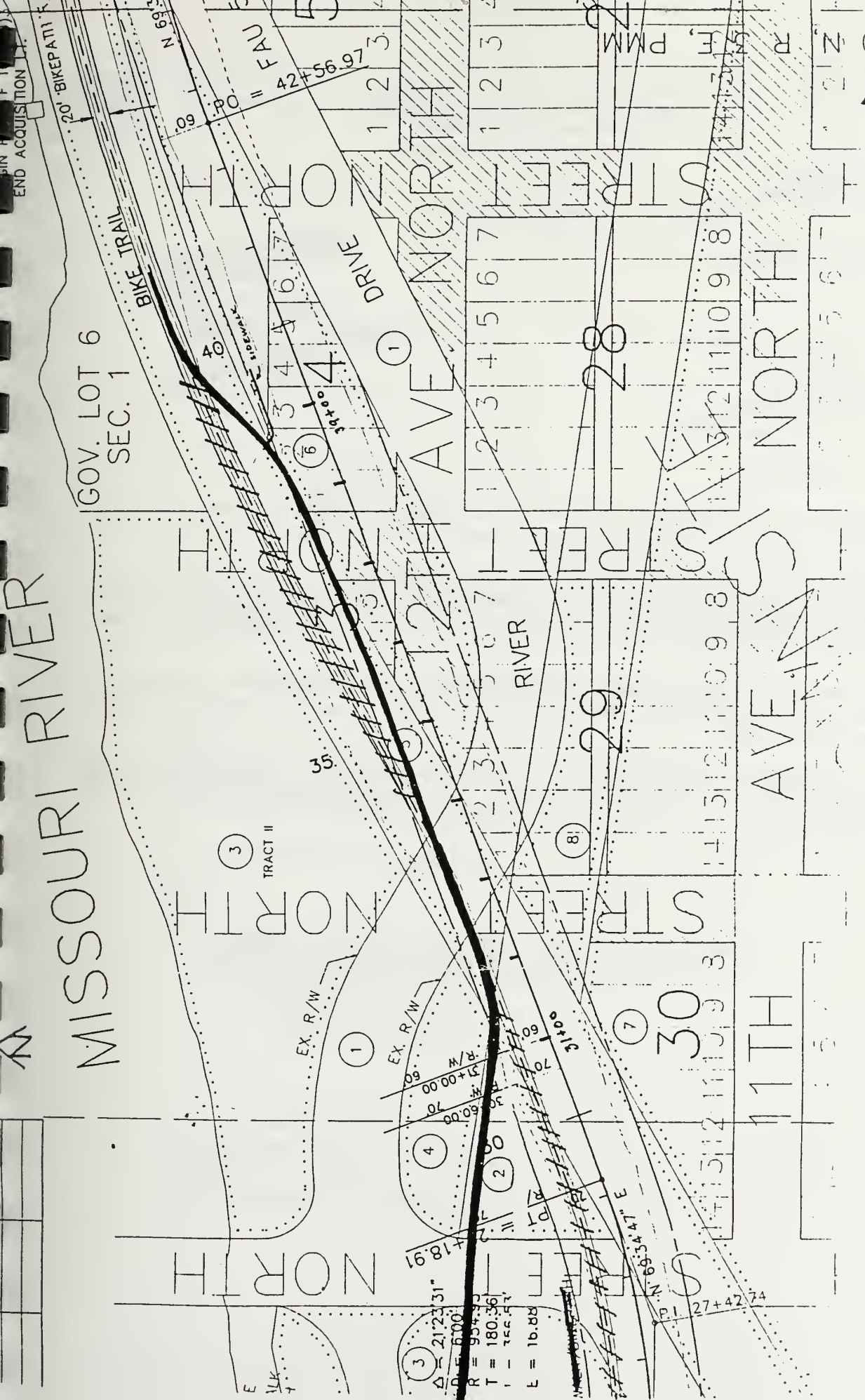
Attachment: Exhibit 1

cc w/attach: Trails Working Group Members

- Chuck Jennings, Recreational Trails, Inc.
- John Mooney, City-County Planning
- Jerry Sepich, City Parks & Recreation
- Bob Thomson, MDT - Great Falls
- Doug Wicks, Recreational Trails, Inc.
- Lyle Meeks, Recreational Trails, Inc.
- Jim Young, City Engineer's Office
- Dave Todd, Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks
- Roger Sanders, Cascade County Planning Board
- John Lawton, City Manager

Bob Habeck, MDT - Helena

- ② CITY OF GREAT FALLS
- ③ MISSOURI RIVER DIVER
- ④ FALLS CONSTRUCTION CO.





DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
CORPS OF ENGINEERS, OMAHA DISTRICT
215 NORTH 17TH STREET
OMAHA, NEBRASKA 68102-4978



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

August 3, 1993

Planning Division

RECEIVED

AUG 9 1993

MORRISON-MAIERLE/CSSA, INC.

Mr. Michael A. Wagner, P.E.
Morrison Maierle
P.O. Box 6147
910 Helena Avenue
Helena, Montana 59604

Dear Mr. Wagner:

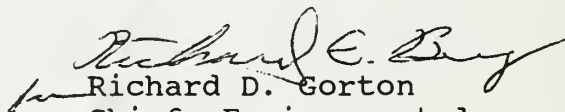
Thank you for notifying us of the public scoping meeting for the proposed project, reference River Drive - 9th to 15th, M 5205(7), Control Number 2178.

Although we were unable to attend the July 21, 1993, meeting, we would still like to participate in the review process for the referenced project.

In order to offer relevant comments concerning the proposed project, we will need a description of the proposed work and the project area map.

If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Jeanette Conley at (402) 221-3133. Thank you again for the opportunity to review this proposal.

Sincerely,


Richard D. Gorton
Chief, Environmental
Analysis Branch
Planning Division



Montana Department
of Transportation

2701 Prospect Avenue
PO Box 201001
Helena MT 59620-1001

September 10, 1993

OCT 12 1993

Kathy

Marc Racicot, Governor

COCA 40

- 9-14-93

Marcella Sherfy
State Historic Preservation Office
102 Broadway
P.O. Box 201202
Helena, MT 59620-1202

Subject: M 5205(7)
River Drive - Great Falls
Control No. 2178

Enclosed is the cultural resource report, CRABS and site form for the above project. GCM Services recommends the single record historic site (24CA356) as ineligible to the NRHP. We agree with their recommendation and request your concurrence.

If you have any questions, please contact Jon Axline at 444-6258.

Edrie Vinson

Edrie L. Vinson, Chief
Environmental & Hazardous Waste Bureau

ELV:JA:D:ENV:30.yb

Enclosures

cc: Eugene W. Stettler, P.E., Great Falls District Engineer
David S. Johnson, P.E., Preconstruction Bureau

CONCUR
MONTANA SHPO
DATE 10/6/93 SIGNED *[Signature]*



MONTANA NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM

1515 East Sixth Avenue
P.O. Box 201800
Helena, Montana 59620-1800
(406) 444-3009

October 25, 1993

Michael A. Wagner
Morrison-Maierle/CSSA
P.O. Box 6147
910 Helena Avenue
Helena, MT 59604

RECEIVED

OCT 27 1993

MORRISON-MAIERLE/CSSA, INC

Dear Mr. Wagner,

This is in response to your request for information on sensitive species near the proposed highway project at River Drive - 9th to 15th, in Great Falls. I have checked our database for locations of sensitive species near the project area as indicated on your map. We currently have no recorded occurrences of sensitive species in this area.

Please remember that the results of a data search by the Montana Natural Heritage Program are not intended as a final statement on sensitive species within a given area, or as a substitute for on-site surveys needed for environmental assessments.

We are required to send you an invoice you for these services, which will arrive under separate cover. Please note, the fee can be waived if work is performed for a federal agency, State of Montana agency, or non-profit organization. When the invoice arrives, present it to the contracting agency and have them return it to the Montana Natural Heritage Program along with a note stating they have not been charged by you for the services provided by the Heritage Program. We will then cancel the fee.

I hope this information is helpful to you. Please call if you have questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,

Cory Craig
Assistant Data Manager

BGP _____ INAW _____ ✓

GREAT FALLS CITY-COUNTY PLANNING BOARD
SERVING THE COUNTY OF CASCADE AND CITY OF GREAT FALLS, MONTANA

October 25, 1993

RECEIVED

OCT 27 1993

MORRISON-MAIERLE/CSSA, INC.

Mr. Mike Wagner
Morrison Maierle/CSSA, Inc.
P. O. Box 6147
910 Helena Avenue
Helena, Montana 59604

Re: River Drive (9th-15th Sts.) Project

Dear Mr. Wagner:

As was discussed during the meeting on October 22, 1993, the following comments/issues are provided for consideration as related to the proposed bicycle and pedestrian trail of the referenced project.

These represent the consensus of the Trails Working Group which reviewed and discussed the preliminary plans for the above project during a meeting on October 14, 1993.

- 1) Trail Alignment. The general alignment of the trail from the west limits of the project to the east limits is acceptable. The alignment generally reflects that which was proposed when the conceptual alignment for the trail was initially developed. Some modifications to that initial alignment, with this project, could now better serve trail users. These are presented later in this letter. A tunnel under River Drive, west of the new intersection and then under the south end of the new bridge, is preferred.
- 2) Typical Section for Trail. The Typical Section for the bike/pedestrian trail should be reconsidered regarding shoulder widths, side slopes, surface crown, and thicknesses for both plant mix and crush top surfaces. Some of these specifics were discussed during the meeting on October 22, 1993.
- 3) Northeast quadrant of new 9th Street and River Drive intersection. It appears there may be sufficient park land and City owned land in this quadrant to allow wider turning radii for the trail. This is generally illustrated on the attached display, Exhibit 1.

- 4) Northwest quadrant of new intersection. The proposed trail should be connected to the bike/pedestrian sidewalk on the proposed 9th-10th Street North (Connector) Bridge. Two alternate alignments (a) and (b) are illustrated on the attached display, Exhibit 1, for consideration. Please consider other alternates, as appropriate. The primary interest is to provide a connection between the two facilities.
- 5) Southwest quadrant of new intersection. The proposed trail should also be connected to the sidewalk from 9th Street. Two alternate alignments (c) and (d) are illustrated on the attached display, Exhibit 1, for consideration.
- 6) For that segment of the trail between the new intersection and where it would access the former BN Railroad right of way (east of the Missouri River Diner), it is preferred that the trail alignment be separated as far from the edge of the new River Drive as public right of way in this area would allow. This is illustrated as a dashed line (a) on the attached display, Exhibit 2. Appropriate safety measures should be considered if sufficient separation between the trail and roadway cannot be provided.
- 7) During the October 22, 1993, meeting, an alignment for the trail east of the Missouri River Diner was illustrated on your plans by Dan Heustis. This proposed alignment, illustrated as a series of dots (b) on the attached display, Exhibit 2, is not a preferred alignment. The Trails Working Group prefers that the trail transcends onto the former BN Railroad right of way as quickly as possible through this area. Again, the interest is to provide as much separation as possible between the trail and the new roadway. In that the City owns this former BN right of way and it is intended for trail use, the alignment (c) presented on the preliminary roadway plans is preferred. The alternate alignment (dots) may also present a grade problem at its east limit.

This letter presents the official position of the Trails Working Group, which was appointed by the City Manager in June, 1990, and directed with the responsibility for trail development in the City of Great Falls. This group includes representatives from the City of Great Falls; Montana Department of Transportation; Great Falls City-County Planning Board; Cascade County Planning Board; Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks; and Recreational Trails, Inc. (citizen volunteers).

Mr. Mike Wagner
Page 3
October 25, 1993

If you have any questions regarding these comments or any other trail related issues, please contact me.

Sincerely,



Benjamin M. Rangel
Senior Planner

BMR:jp

Attachments

cc w/attach: Trails Working Group Members

- Chuck Jennings, Recreational Trails, Inc.
- John Mooney, City-County Planning
- Jerry Sepich, City Parks & Recreation
- Bob Thomson, MDT - Great Falls
- Doug Wicks, Recreational Trails, Inc.
- Lyle Meeks, Neil Consultants
- Jim Young, City Engineer's Office
- Dave Todd, Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks
- Roger Sanders, Cascade County Planning Board
- Gary Stowe, City Parks & Recreation
- John Lawton, City Manager
- Bob Habeck, MDT - Helena

Jim Rearden, City Engineer
Doug Morgan, MDT - Helena

STATE	PROJECT NUMBER	SHEET No
MONT.	M 5205(7)	

RIVER DRIVE - GREAT FALLS
9TH ST. NORTH INTERSECTION

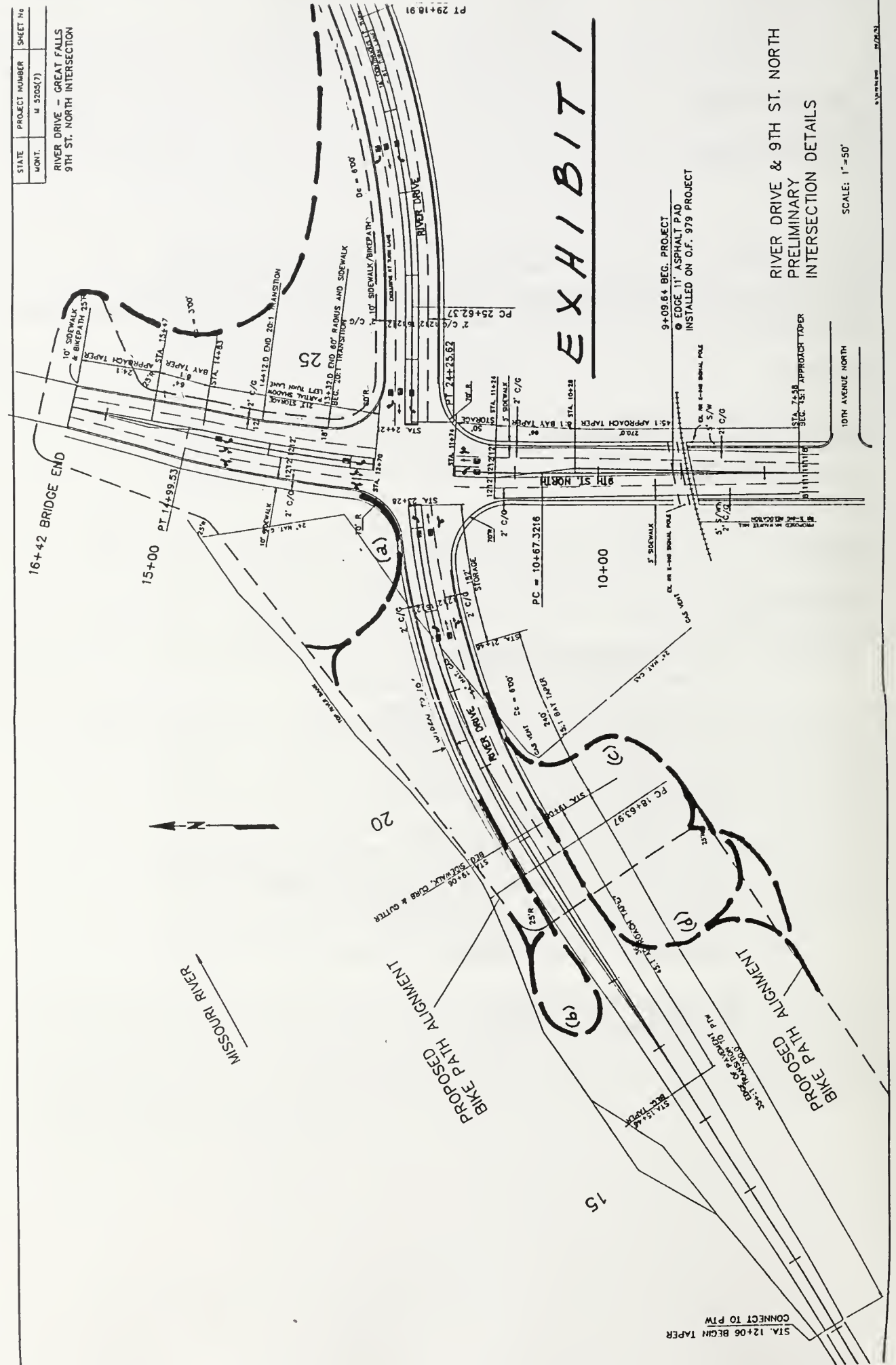


EXHIBIT 1

RIVER DRIVE & 9TH ST. NORTH
PRELIMINARY
INTERSECTION DETAILS

SCALE: 1"=50'

STA. 12+06 BEGIN TAPER
CONNECT TO PIW

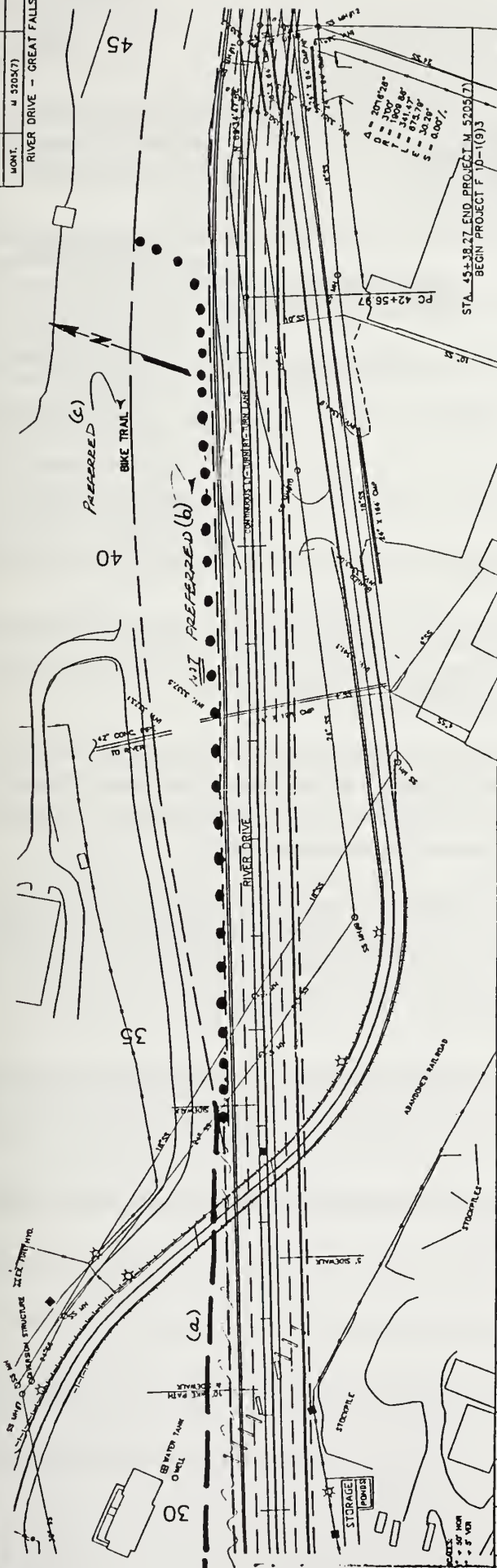
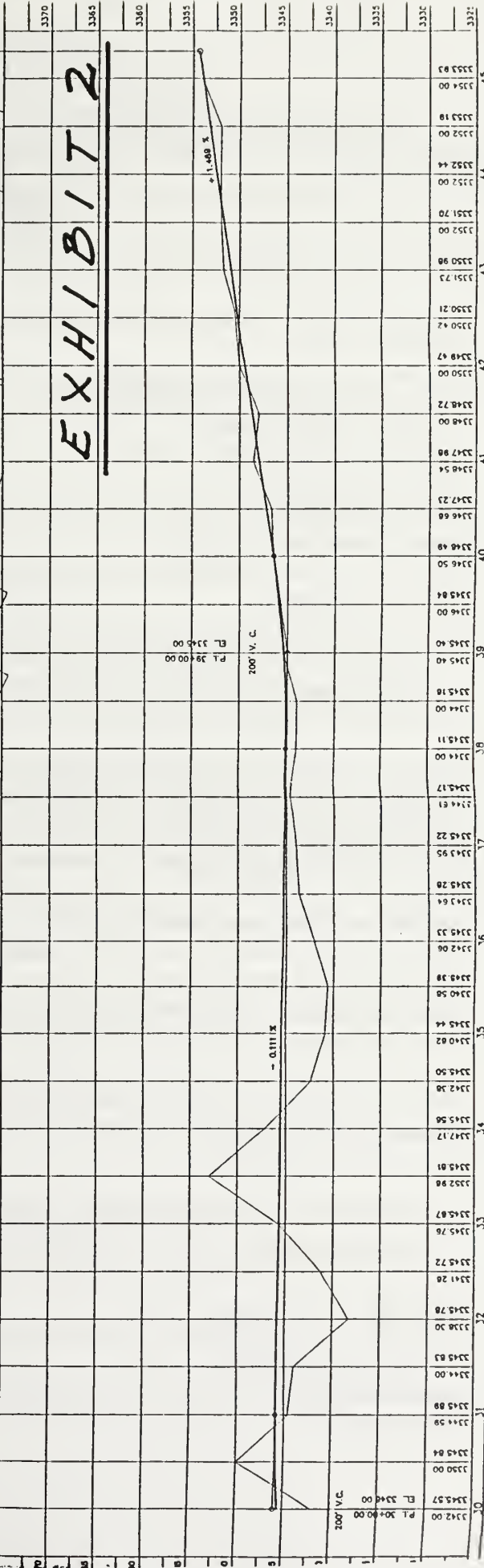


EXHIBIT 2





MASTER FILE
COPY

P.O. Box 5021, 59403-5021

October 29, 1993

Montana Department of Transportation
Consultant Design Section
Attn: Mr. Doug Morgan, P.E.
2701 Prospect Avenue
P.O. Box 201001
Helena, Montana 59620-1001

RECEIVED

DEC 17 1993

MORGAN, DOUGLAS, P.E.

M5205 (7)

Date Recd. Preconst 12-16-93	
Act	Info
	MAIL ROUTE
	30 Preconst Eng
	30 Assistant
	30 Office Mgr
	31 Safety Mgmt.
	32 Road Design
	33 Environment
	34 Hydraulics
	35 Survey & Mapping
	36 Traffic Eng.
	37 Traffic Operations
	39 Consultant Dep.
	E.W. Stettler
	R/W
	File

Dear Mr. Morgan;

As the Montana Department of Transportation proceeds with the design for the River Drive (9th to 15th) project, it is important that you be aware that City of Great Falls has concerns about the aesthetics of the surrounding area when the project is completed.

Our view is that this will in the future be the "North Entrance" to our City. With this anticipated visibility and impact, the addition of irrigation, turf, landscaping and trees is certainly not an unrealistic expectation, in my opinion, to the scope of the project. Serious consideration to these issues in your approach to the design work would be appreciated.

As you have been made aware of by our staff, the City has an "Agreement and Partial Release of Restrictive Covenants" with Elk's Lodge #214 regarding Elk Riverside Park, an area which will be impacted by the project. A decision will need to be reached between MDT and the City of Great Falls concerning incorporating the appraisal and compensation into the right of way acquisition phase and the cost of the project.

The City's Park and Recreation Department is willing to work with you regarding the landscape design and in addition, the City would commit to assuming the responsibility of maintenance of the area upon completion.

I am hopeful that a cooperative effort could result in a project that would be a mutual benefit to your department and the City of Great Falls.

Sincerely,

John Lawton,
City Manager

AGREEMENT AND PARTIAL RELEASE OF RESTRICTIVE COVENANTS

THIS AGREEMENT, made and entered into this 18th day of June, 1991, between the Great Falls Lodge No. 214 of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks of the United States of America, a non-profit corporation, hereinafter referred to as "Elks" and the City of Great Falls, Montana, a municipal corporation, hereinafter referred to as "City";

WHEREAS, on August 15, 1966, Elks conveyed to City certain real property described in the bargain and sale deed for park purposes as recorded on March 25, 1974, appearing in Reel No. 92, Document No. 624 of the Clerk and Recorder's Office of Cascade County, Montana. This conveyance contains the following restrictions:

"Provided, said lands, and the whole and every part thereof shall be occupied, used or held for park and recreational purposes and uses incident or appropriate thereto as may be determined by the Board of Park Commissioners of the City of Great Falls, or its successors, but upon ceasing to be so held, used and enjoyed, as to the whole or any part, this conveyance shall, to the extent of the breach, become void and no longer of force, effect or operation as against the party of the first part, its successors and assigns."

WHEREAS, in association with the Montana Department of Highways, City is pursuing a combined program of projects including: 1) the construction of a new 10th/9th Street North Connector Bridge; 2) the reconstruction of a portion of 9th Street North between River Drive and 8th Avenue North; and, 3) the reconstruction of River Drive between the south end of the new 10th Street Bridge and 15th Street North; and,

WHEREAS, the right of way for said projects will encroach over and upon approximately 1 acre, more or less, near the northeast end of the property described in the above-referenced deed; and,

WHEREAS, a portion of the existing right of way of River Drive through said property will be returned to park land; and,

WHEREAS, a release from the said restrictive covenants is necessary to accommodate the right of way needs of said combined program of projects; and,

WHEREAS, the City has renamed, in perpetuity, the entire "Riverside Park" with a name of the Elks own choosing and is now referenced as, "Elks Riverside Park;"

NOW, THEREFORE, THE PARTIES HERETO MUTUALLY COVENANT AND AGREE AS FOLLOWS:

1. Elks hereby release from the protective covenants quoted above, 1 acre, more or less, located in the northeast end of the property for purposes of allowing construction of said combined program of projects over and upon said property.

2. City will have the subject property, 1 acre, more or less, appraised and thereafter will expend the appraised amount on improvements in the park (Elks will be involved in determining the improvements to be made). This shall be a condition subsequent and this agreement will not be binding on the parties to this agreement until satisfied.

3. City will not record this document until after the necessary contracts have been awarded for the construction of all of the said projects.

4. Except for the approximate 1 acre hereby released from restrictive covenants, the parties hereto agree and affirm that the said protective covenants above-referenced shall continue to apply to the balance of the real property described in the above-referenced deed.

5. This agreement shall run with the land and be binding upon the successors and assigns of the parties hereto.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have caused this agreement to be executed as of the day and year first above written.

GREAT FALLS LODGE NO. 214 of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks of the United States of America, a non-profit organization.

Donnell Y. Smith Bill Bos
Joseph R. Hume
John R. Hume

Trustees of Great Falls Lodge No. 214 of Benevolent & Protective Order of Elks

CITY OF GREAT FALLS, MONTANA

Ardith Aiken
 Ardith Aiken, Mayor

John W. Lawton
 John W. Lawton, City Manager

ATTEST:

Peggy Lamberson
 Peggy Lamberson, City Clerk

(SEAL OF CITY)

David V. Gliko
 APPROVED AS TO FORM:
 David V. Gliko, City Attorney

RECORDED APR 27 1991
 TIME 10:15 AM
 DOCUMENT NO. _____

JOE TRONHA
 Clerk and Recorder
 Cascade County, Montana

By Joe Tronha
 Denier

State of Montana)
County of Cascade :
City of Great Falls)

On this 18th day of June, 1991, before me, the undersigned, a Notary Public for the State of Montana, personally appeared Donald Stuart, Bill Bos; Logan Hurlbert, Joe Summers, and Albert Kunesh, known to me to be the Trustees of Great Falls Lodge No. 214 of Benevolent & Protective Order of Elks whose names are subscribed to the within instrument and acknowledged to me that they executed the same.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my official seal the day and year in this certificate first above written.

Maurice L. Walworth

Notary Public for the State of Montana

Residing at Great Falls, Montana

My Commission Expires: 1-25-92

(Notarial Seal)

State of Montana)
County of Cascade :
City of Great Falls)

On this 18th day of June, 1991, before me, the undersigned, a Notary Public for the State of Montana, personally appeared Ardith Aiken and John W. Lawton known to me to be the Mayor and City Manager of the City of Great Falls, Montana, whose names are subscribed to the within instrument and acknowledged to me that they executed the same.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my official seal the day and year in this certificate first above written.

Ardith Aiken

Notary Public for the State of Montana

Residing at Great Falls, Montana

My Commission Expires: 4-25-94

(Notarial Seal)

RECEIVED

Montana Department
of
Fish, Wildlife & Parks

NOV 1 - 1993

MORRISON-MAIERLE/CSSA, INC.



P.O. Box 6610
Great Falls MT 59406
29 October 1993

Edrie L. Vinson, Chief
Environmental & Hazardous Waste Bureau
Montana Department of Transportation
2701 Prospect Avenue
Helena MT 59620-9726

Mr. Mike Wagner
Morrison Maierle/CSSA
P.O. Box 6147
910 HELENA AVE.
HELENA MT 59604

SUBJECT: RIVER DRIVE - 9th to 15th
M 5205(7)
Control Number 2178

Dear ^{Mike} Edrie:

Please consider this a response to your request for information on the fisheries and wildlife resources relative to the proposed project.

~~Based on a review of the proposed project, the Region 4 Wildlife Staff has no specific comments.~~

~~Review of the proposed project resulted in concerns or impacts to wildlife as summarized in the comment section below.~~

X Based on a review of the proposed project, the Region 4 Fisheries Staff has no specific comments relating to the potential impacts on fisheries habitat.

Review of the proposed project produced concerns over impacts to fisheries habitat as summarized below:

Comments:

The type of fisheries habitat in the proposed project's vicinity is described in the Montana Interagency Stream Database. The Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks reserves the right to address any impacts to any stream or its banks or tributaries by any type or form of construction when detailed plans are furnished with an application as required by the Stream Preservation Act.

Sincerely,

George Zinknes
Fisheries Division

Wildlife Division

C: Al Wiperman



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
CORPS OF ENGINEERS, OMAHA DISTRICT
215 NORTH 17TH STREET
OMAHA, NEBRASKA 68102-4978



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

October 29, 1993

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
1520 East 6th Avenue
PO Box 202301
Helena, MT 59620-2301
(406) 444-6670

RECEIVED
NOV 1 - 1993
MORRISON-MAIERLE/CSSA, INC.

Michael Wagner
Morrison-Maierle/CSSA
P.O. Box 6147
Helena, Montana 59604

Dear Mr. Wagner:

Reference is made to your letter concerning the preliminary field review report on the upgrading of River Drive and replacement of the 10th Street Bridge over the Missouri River in Great Falls, Montana.

Under the authority of Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, Department of the Army permits are required for the placement of fill material below the ordinary high water mark of our nation's rivers, streams, lakes or in wetlands.

Please fill out the enclosed application and return to this office, along with a sketch or drawing of the proposed work for a determination if a Department of the Army permit may be required.

If you have any questions, please let me know.

Sincerely,

Robert E. McInerney

Robert E. McInerney
State Supervisor,
Helena Regulatory Branch

Enclosure



IN REPLY REFER TO:

United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

ECOLOGICAL SERVICES

100 N PARK, SUITE 320

HELENA MT 59601

TAKE
PRIDE IN
AMERICA

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NOV 4 - 1993

MORRISON-MAIERLE/CSSA, INC.

M. 44 MT Hwy
(Control No. 2178)

November 3, 1993

Michael A. Wagner, P.E.
Project Manager, Geologist
Morrison-Maierle/CSSA
P.O. Box 6147
910 Helena Avenue
Helena, MT 59604

Dear Mr. Wagner,

This responds to your October 19, 1993 letters concerning Montana Department of Transportation Project, River Drive - 9th to 15th, Control No. 2178, Great Falls, Montana, which requested identification of threatened and endangered species and fisheries information that should be considered in connection with this project. Your letter also requested other comments we may have.

Considering the specific nature and location of this project we do not believe there will be any project related impacts to threatened and endangered species. We do not have any site specific information for other fish and wildlife resources in the proposed project area. The Montana Heritage Program and Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks may be an excellent source of information for site specific fish and wildlife data for this or other Montana Department of Transportation projects.

We appreciate your efforts to consider and conserve fish and wildlife resources, including threatened and endangered species. If you have questions regarding this letter, please contact Rob Hazlewood of my staff at (406) 449-5225.

Sincerely,

Kemper M. McMaster
Field Supervisor
Montana Field Office

RMH/rmh

**Montana Department
of
Fish, Wildlife & Parks**



1420 East Sixth Avenue
Helena, Montana 59620

December 21, 1993

Mr. Gordon Stockstad, Acting Chief
Environmental & Hazardous Waste Bureau
Dept. of Transportation
2701 Prospect
Helena, MT 59620

Dear Mr. Stockstad:

RE: River Drive - Great Falls
(M 5205 (7), Control Number 2178)

We have reviewed your above-mentioned proposed project area and would like to bring to your attention the existence of Gibson Park near the road you are planning to reconstruct.

This park was developed with the assistance of federal money through the Land and Water Conservation Fund. If any part of the park will be affected by your highway reconstruction project, we will have to work with the federal government to mitigate any impacts.

If you feel there may be a potential impact, please contact me and I will provide you with any additional information you may require.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

MARY ELLEN MC DONALD
Administrative Officer
Operations Bureau
Parks Division

cc: Mike Aderhold, Region 4 Supvr
Dave Todd, Region 4 Park Mgr
Michael A Wagner, P.E.
P. O. Box 6147, 910 Helena Ave
Helena, MT 59601

Jerry Sepich, Director
Parks & Recreation
City of Great Falls
P O Box 5021
Great Falls, MT 59403-5021

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DEC 27 1993

MORRISON-MAIERLE/CSSA, INC.

AGREEMENT AND PARTIAL RELEASE OF RESTRICTIVE COVENANTS

THIS AGREEMENT, made and entered into this 18th day of June, 1991, between the Great Falls Lodge No. 214 of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks of the United States of America, a non-profit corporation, hereinafter referred to as "Elks" and the City of Great Falls, Montana, a municipal corporation, hereinafter referred to as "City";

WHEREAS, on August 15, 1966, Elks conveyed to City certain real property described in the bargain and sale deed for park purposes as recorded on March 25, 1974, appearing in Reel No. 92, Document No. 624 of the Clerk and Recorder's Office of Cascade County, Montana. This conveyance contains the following restrictions:

"Provided, said lands, and the whole and every part thereof shall be occupied, used or held for park and recreational purposes and uses incident or appropriate thereto as may be determined by the Board of Park Commissioners of the City of Great Falls, or its successors, but upon ceasing to be so held, used and enjoyed, as to the whole or any part, this conveyance shall, to the extent of the breach, become void and no longer of force, effect or operation as against the party of the first part, its successors and assigns."

WHEREAS, in association with the Montana Department of Highways, City is pursuing a combined program of projects including: 1) the construction of a new 10th/9th Street North Connector Bridge; 2) the reconstruction of a portion of 9th Street North between River Drive and 8th Avenue North; and, 3) the reconstruction of River Drive between the south end of the new 10th Street Bridge and 15th Street North; and,

WHEREAS, the right of way for said projects will encroach over and upon approximately 1 acre, more or less, near the northeast end of the property described in the above-referenced deed; and,

WHEREAS, a portion of the existing right of way of River Drive through said property will be returned to park land; and,

WHEREAS, a release from the said restrictive covenants is necessary to accommodate the right of way needs of said combined program of projects; and,

WHEREAS, the City has renamed, in perpetuity, the entire "Riverside Park" with a name of the Elks own choosing and is now referenced as, "Elks Riverside Park;"

NOW, THEREFORE, THE PARTIES HERETO MUTUALLY COVENANT AND AGREE AS FOLLOWS:

1. Elks hereby release from the protective covenants quoted above, 1 acre, more or less, located in the northeast end of the property for purposes of allowing construction of said combined program of projects over and upon said property.

2. City will have the subject property, 1 acre, more or less, appraised and thereafter will expend the appraised amount on improvements in the park (Elks will be involved in determining the improvements to be made). This shall be a condition subsequent and this agreement will not be binding on the parties to this agreement until satisfied.

3. City will not record this document until after the necessary contracts have been awarded for the construction of all of the said projects.

4. Except for the approximate 1 acre hereby released from restrictive covenants, the parties hereto agree and affirm that the said protective covenants above-referenced shall continue to apply to the balance of the real property described in the above-referenced deed.

5. This agreement shall run with the land and be binding upon the successors and assigns of the parties hereto.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have caused this agreement to be executed as of the day and year first above written.

GREAT FALLS LODGE NO. 214 of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks of the United States of America, a non-profit organization.

Donnell Y. Smith Bill Cos
Joe R. Hume
John W. Lawton

Trustees of Great Falls Lodge No. 214 of Benevolent & Protective Order of Elks

CITY OF GREAT FALLS, MONTANA

Ardith Aiken
 Ardith Aiken, Mayor

John W. Lawton
 John W. Lawton, City Manager

ATTEST:

Peggy Lamberson
 Peggy Lamberson, City Clerk

(SEAL OF CITY)

David V. Gliko
 APPROVED AS TO FORM:
 David V. Gliko, City Attorney

RECORDED AUG 27 1991
 TIME 10:15 AM
 DOCUMENT NO. _____

JOE TROTTA
 Clerk and Recorder
 Cascade County, Montana

BY R. E. D. Leman
 Depute

State of Montana)
County of Cascade :
City of Great Falls)

On this 18th day of June, 1991, before me, the undersigned, a Notary Public for the State of Montana, personally appeared Donald Stuart, Bill Bos; Logan Hurlbert, Joe Summers, and Albert Kunesh, known to me to be the Trustees of Great Falls Lodge No. 214 of Benevolent & Protective Order of Elks whose names are subscribed to the within instrument and acknowledged to me that they executed the same.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my official seal the day and year in this certificate first above written.

(Notarial Seal)

Maurice L. Walworth
Notary Public for the State of Montana
Residing at Great Falls, Montana
My Commission Expires: 1-25-92

State of Montana)
County of Cascade :
City of Great Falls)

On this 18th day of June, 1991, before me, the undersigned, a Notary Public for the State of Montana, personally appeared Ardith Aiken and John W. Lawton known to me to be the Mayor and City Manager of the City of Great Falls, Montana, whose names are subscribed to the within instrument and acknowledged to me that they executed the same.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my official seal the day and year in this certificate first above written.

(Notarial Seal)

Ardith Aiken
Notary Public for the State of Montana
Residing at Great Falls, Montana
My Commission Expires: 4-25-94

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MAR 30 1993

MORRISON-MAIERLE/CSSA, INC

25 MARCH 1993

Morrison Maierle/CSSA
P.O. Box 6147
Helena, Mt., 59601

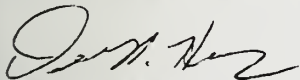
Subject: Southern 9th Street Connector Bridge Approachway

Dear Sir:

My wife and I are the owners of the Missouri River Diner which is located at the intersection of the 10th street bridge and River Road. It is our understanding your company has the contract of designing and engineering the southern approachway to the new bridge. We have some concern and would appreciate any information you can forward to us on the following:

1. The new River Road from 14th street to 9th street will be located south of our establishment instead of north as it is now. Our question is what will be the road height, compared to the height of our business building? Our concern is whether traffic will be obligated to drive uphill, downhill or level into our parking lot.
2. Will there be Two openings in the curbing so as to allow easy access and departure?
3. Will the roadway be lighted at or near the business?
4. Could you give us the distance in feet and inches from our business building to the new Right-Of-Way?
5. What are the plans for re-locating power lines? Is there the possibility of putting power lines underground in order to keep the area more open and clear of obstructions.
6. Will 11th street extend to the new roadway?
7. What are, if any, plans for the area of land between the present "S" curve and the new 9th street road between the new intersection and bridge? This area of land could be made into a park. Such a park would entail landscaping and the installation of a sprinkler system. Another idea would be to take one of the present bridge's support arches and place it as a monument dedicated to past designs and also something future generations can look upon. The entrance or approachway could be from the River Trail. Later a drinking fountain, seats or picnic tables, lighting and trash retainers could be installed

This area of the city many years ago was once the city dump. In the following years it is still an eye-sore, especially for visitors to the city. Here is an excellent opportunity/time to enhance one of the cities entry-ways. My wife and I support the Rivers Trail and making Great Falls look green and beautiful. Thank You.



Delbert A. Henry
Missour River Diner
1000 River Drive North
Great Falls, Mt., 59401

APPENDIX D - BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES REPORT

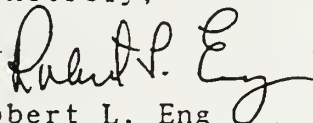
September 22, 1993

Mr. Robert Carroll
Morrison-Maierle Environmental
910 Helena Ave.
Helena, MT 59604-6147

Dear Bob:

In response to your request, I spent time at the site on River Drive in Great Falls where the Montana Highway Department is proposing a highway realignment. The following report addresses the areas of concern with projects of this type, i.e., the Biological Report (habitats etc.), the Biological Assessment (Threatened and Endangered Species) and the Rare and Sensitive Species Report.

Sincerely,



Robert L. Eng
Certified Wildlife Biologist

0275.070/090/7010

PROJECT NO. 0275.070/040/7010 - River Drive

Biological Report

No natural wetlands were noted along the proposed construction line. Although adjacent to the Missouri River, the proposed change lies in an area probably best classified as light industrial and will occur largely on land already disturbed (i.e. parking lots, abandoned railroad, existing roads etc.). Two small areas of grassland will be disrupted as well as a couple small clumps of shrubs, both of which could easily be restored following construction. Although considerable use is made of the nearby Missouri River by aquatic oriented birds (primarily waterfowl), this highway realignment should not affect these birds other than a temporary adjustment they may make during construction activities.

Biological Assessment

Analysis

Two species of birds which are currently classified as endangered (Montana Natural Heritage Program 1992) can occur seasonally in the area. The bald eagle (Haliaeetus leucocephalus) can be observed quite commonly during the late fall, winter and early spring along the river where they undoubtedly are attracted to the food source in the form of waterfowl and fish. However, the nearest known nest site is several miles southwest of Great Falls along the Missouri River (Dennis Flath, Pers. commun.).

The peregrine falcon (Falco peregrinus) may be seen as a migrant, although far less frequently than the bald eagle. No nesting pairs are known to exist within 100 miles of the proposed construction (Dennis Flath op cit.).

Both of these birds are attracted to an aquatic environment where a food source (waterfowl and fish for the bald eagle, waterfowl for the falcon) is usually more readily available. Waterfowl are quite common along the river in this area. However, no major influence of the aquatic habitat is anticipated with this road modification and consequently no change in seasonal use can be expected by the above two species.

Determination of Effect

Based on the analysis above, the scope and location of the proposed construction warrants a no effect for the bald eagle and peregrine falcon or their habitats.

Rare and Sensitive Species Report

Based on habitat present in the area and the reported distribution of sensitive plants (Lesica and Shelly 1991) and animals (Montana Natural Heritage Program, Bergeron et al. 1992), no rare or sensitive species are present in the area.

Literature Cited

Bergeron, D., C. Jones, D.L. Genter, and D. Sullivan. 1992.

F.D. Skaar's Montana Bird Distribution, Fourth Edition. Special Publication No. 2. Montana Natural Heritage Program, Helena. 116 pp.

Flath, D. 1993. Personal communication. (Phone call, 9/22/93).

Lesica, P. and J.S. Shelly. 1991. Sensitive, threatened and endangered vascular plants of Montana. Montana Natural Heritage Program. Occasional Publication No. 1. Helena, Mt 88 pp.

Montana Natural Heritage Program. 1992. Animal species of special concern. 9 pp.

